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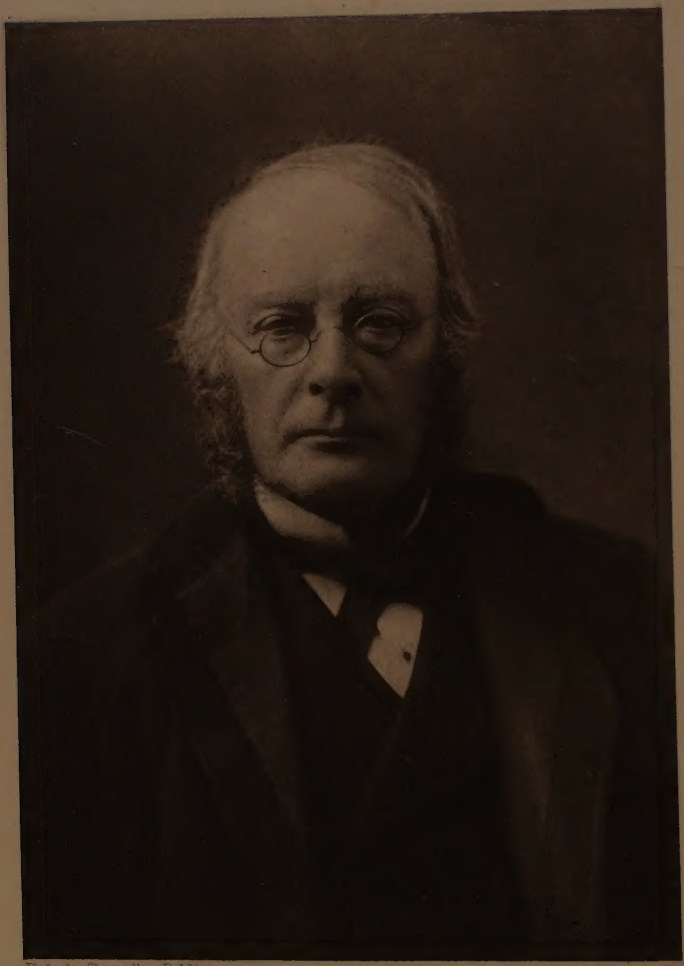

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Sam. Ferguson

SIR SAMUEL FERGUSON

IN

THE IRELAND OF HIS DAY

BY

LADY FERGUSON

AUTHOR OF 'THE IRISH BEFORE THE CONQUEST,'
'LIFE OF WILLIAM REEVES, D.D., LORD BISHOP OF DOWN,
CONNOR, AND DROMORE,' ETC., ETC.

WITH PORTRAITS

IN TWO VOLUMES

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SIR SAMUEL FERGUSON.

CHAPTER XVI.

1862–1873.

FRIENDSHIPS (*continued*)—HENRY WINTERBOTHAM, M.P.

"So, whene'er I turn my eye
Back upon the days gone by,
Saddening thoughts of friends come o'er me,—
Friends who closed their course before me.

Yet what binds us, friend to friend,
But that soul with soul can blend?
Soul-like were those hours of yore!
Let us walk in soul once more!

Take, O boatman, thrice thy fee;
Take,—I give it willingly;
For, invisible to thee,
Spirits twain hath crossed with me!"

—From the German of UHLAND.

IT was on the way to Homburg in the autumn of 1862 that the friendship was formed which gave to Ferguson and his wife one who was almost as a son to them for the short remainder of his life. Henry

Winterbotham, a young English barrister, afterwards Member for Stroud, and Under Secretary of State for the Home Department, was then beginning his professional career in London, and spending his vacation abroad in the companionship of a sister and cousin. Ferguson and his wife, accompanied by her sister, had journeyed leisurely from Antwerp to Trèves on the Moselle, lingering in the cities, so rich in art and architecture, in the Low Countries through which they passed, and exploring the picturesque region of the Ardennes. At their hotel at Trèves they noted their fellow-travellers, but did not exchange courtesies, devoting their stay at Trèves to the exploration of the grand Roman remains of the once Imperial city.

Next morning they observed their fellow-travellers on the deck of the steamer in which they were about to descend the Moselle. Not wishing to lose any part of the scenery of the winding and romantic river, breakfast was ordered on deck. When his wife joined Ferguson to summon him to his repast, she found him in animated converse with the young Englishman, which she hesitated to interrupt. They were discussing the question whether Milton—in 'Paradise Lost'—did not, in his description of the council held by Satan and his compeers after their expulsion from Heaven, derive his material from the debates and debaters in the Long Parliament? Could it be that Sir Harry Vane was pointed at in *Belial?* and who were the originals of *Beëlzebub*, *Moloch*, and the great Arch-Fiend himself? She waited for a pause in their

conversation, when Ferguson introduced his wife to Mr Winterbotham, and she proposed the *al fresco* breakfast, and invited him and his party to join them. A few hours sufficed to make them intimate, and when the young lawyer—who alone of the party was familiar with the district—proposed that the Fergusons should give up their project of reaching Coblenz that evening, and, breaking the journey midway, should strike inland under his guidance to Bertrich, and spend the next day—Sunday—at this quiet place, they acquiesced. On landing, a cart was despatched with the luggage and an order for rooms to Bertrich, and the combined party ascended a mountain, on whose summit was a restaurant, commanding a fine view of the Moselle. Here they dined. They afterwards descended the other side of the hill, reaching their destination in the evening. The sunny scramble up the mountain, the walk through the woods in the afternoon, the simple service in the church next day, the chanting of the *Te Deum*, and singing of the Hundredth Psalm in the woodland solitudes on the afternoon of Sunday, followed by a few more days of delightful intercourse, made the new acquaintances fast friends. Before they separated it was arranged that Mr Winterbotham, who had never been in Ireland, should spend his next vacation with his new-found friends. From thenceforth hardly a year was allowed to pass without visits from him. He made numberless friends in Ferguson's house. His manly and noble character, his candour, his frank, affec-

tionate, and courteous bearing, attracted all who came in contact with him, and made them his warm well-wishers.

He was a devoted adherent of Mr Gladstone, and called himself a Radical, and his political views were not those of most of his Irish hosts; yet he was so candid, honest, and sincere, that these differences did not break the ties of friendship.

> Remember I am the greatest Radical in the Ministry, and yet you approve of me [he wrote to a Conservative friend]. I am amused at men's prejudices. Often when shut up in some country-house with some old Tory, I watch the surprise with which the honest fellow's prejudices drop off as he recognises how much we have in common. I generally begin with the piano [Mr Winterbotham was a delightful musician], and you know even Saul's evil spirit couldn't stand that.

In a letter to Mr W. de Vismes Kane of Drumreaske House, Co. Monaghan, to whom Mrs Ferguson had written about him, he speaks of her—

> I have already had cause to know that she is not only a charming companion herself, but a most successful friendship-planter. If you have as much confidence in her judgment as I have, you will let me look forward to the pleasure of making your acquaintance whenever you may come to London or I to Dublin.

That acquaintance was made when he next visited the Fergusons. Soon after, he cemented the friendship by becoming Mr Kane's guest at Drumreaske.

Henry Winterbotham was a delicately organised, fair-complexioned young man: his smile was winning, his nature frank and gracious. His character is

disclosed in his correspondence. The letters that happen to have been preserved are chiefly addressed to Mrs Ferguson:—

My dear Mrs Ferguson,—An answer by return your letter certainly shall have. I am conscious of a strong gravitation towards Ireland whenever I think of a holiday. It has become my established play-ground. I need no reflection to feel assured of enjoyment there, and no words to tell me of the cordial welcome I should receive. But in truth I am just now drawn powerfully to my own home. I have not seen my mother since Christmas, and of my father I have had only a glance; and besides my own longing for home, I don't think it is quite fair for the young birds to spend all their cheerfulness away from home, so Willy and I resolved to go home and cheer up my father and mother. They are getting old, and as their own life gets more shadowy they live more in the intenser life of their children; so, though they never urge it, I know they are glad we are going to spend our holiday with them. I am sure I need say no more to you to excuse myself from Dublin this Easter. You can't think how much I enjoyed myself with you last autumn, and to stay in Dublin with you and see more of your friends would be a real delight. However, perhaps Dublin hospitality would not be my best doctor; for be it known to you in strict confidence, I am suffering from gout. Why *did* my great-grandfather drink the port and leave the gout instead? I have been very busy (for a young barrister) ever since Christmas, and sedentary pursuits and the everlasting dinner-parties to which my social instincts lead me have told at last. So I am going to rest in the country. Our legal holidays begin this week. I go home to Stroud to-day. Term begins, with a wholesome disregard of ecclesiastical proprieties, the day after Good Friday. Kane goes to Ireland next week. I am sure his mother must want his comfort, so I did but feebly urge him to spend the holidays with me. I see a great deal of him, as he has quite fallen in with a little knot of fast friends here: he will tell you of them. We shall miss

him very much when he returns to Ireland for good. He is becoming half a Saxon already. Willy enjoys the society you were kind enough to introduce him to at Cambridge. It is quite a new phase of college life to him. But notwithstanding its charms and vigorous boating and fiddling (for he is devoting himself to the violoncello!), he is, I think, working well for his degree, this being his last year. What he will do then isn't settled. I want him to come to the Bar—where there is plenty of room for both of us—but whether he would keep his heart for so long a celibacy I don't know. Good wives are at a high premium here, I fancy. I can't get any one to have me. Perhaps a visit to Dublin would be more successful.

You can't think how Irish questions interest me, though they but half amuse me. There is a strange touch of the comic about even the greatest of them, and still more in the treatment of them. To a thoughtful man, however, the whole of that Belfast story, and chiefly its end, must be very sad. It isn't that Englishmen have better principles or instincts, but they have more law-abiding *habits*. But I mustn't babble over into a fourth sheet. Remember me kindly to Mr Ferguson, and believe me always your affectionate friend,

HENRY S. P. WINTERBOTHAM.

The "Kane" here spoken of was not the Monaghan Squire, but the eldest son of Sir Robert and Lady Kane. Robert Romney Kane, now a County Court Judge, was then a student of law, and he too, like his namesake, met Winterbotham first at 20 North Great George's Street. They became fast friends, and, both in London and in Ireland, saw much of one another.

In 1864 Winterbotham and his younger brother William had joined Ferguson and his wife, who were making an archæological tour in the West. "I care nothing for your antiquities," wrote Henry, "but much for Mr Ferguson's society. Wherever he wishes to

delve I am ready to hold the hod. Let me know your movements. As soon as I am free Willy and I will join you." They "turned up" at Sligo, and, with the Fergusons, made their way to Donegal. There Dr Stokes and his daughter, Dr Petrie, Dr Todd, and the Rev. H. H. Dickinson joined the party, and spent some time together in exploring the region of Glencolombkill.

In 1867 Winterbotham wrote from Switzerland:—

Many thanks for your kind letter. I hope you will ere this have received a newspaper I directed to be sent you with an account of our election. I don't know if the paper mentions the dark young stranger who hurried up just before the election and was by my side throughout. Kane seemed to enjoy the fun, and he and my young brother Willy shouted enough for an army. I am very worn out with the heat, excitement, and fatigue, and have fled here. Kane and my two younger brothers are letting off a little of their superfluous steam by walking round Mont Blanc while I am spending the week in dozing and writing letters. I am perched up at Glion overlooking the Lake. I need not say how lovely and fresh everything looks. The hills seem never to grow old. The wooded hills just behind Glion remind me closely of those delightful ones about Bertrich where we spent the Sunday (how many?) years ago. When the three younger ones rejoin me on Monday, we hope to go to Zermatt and really exert ourselves. My election has started me on a new and interesting career, and I am unaffectedly glad of my success; but nothing seems to make up to me the accumulated sorrows of the last year, or to do anything to fill the void they made nearest my heart. Yet every one says I am very lucky; so I am going to believe it. At any rate, so long as I can stand I will fight on. I am very glad indeed to hear of Mr Ferguson's appointment, so congenial to his tastes. I can understand, however, that it is no small sacrifice so far

as money goes. But how true is it "man does not live by bread alone," and what a ludicrous estimate does the outside world make of the sources of our real happiness, especially in your case, who seem to me to live in a very atmosphere of kindly friendship! I should like very much to breathe that air again, but for many reasons I cannot hope to do so yet; but certainly when I do next come to Ireland, I shall not treat you so ungratefully as I have done, but make my way to Great George's Street or a Record Tower, or wherever else your hospitality will shake me down a bed. Willy is articled to a solicitor in London, a friend of mine and brother of Alfred Waterhouse the architect. He is as full of energy as ever, and will, I think, have a useful and honourable career. But one would think I was writing to you from the Antipodes. Farewell. Remember me very kindly to Mr Ferguson, and let not any whom I have known quite forget me.—Believe me always, my dear Mrs Ferguson, your loving friend,

HENRY S. P. WINTERBOTHAM.

The young Member for Stroud had to contest his seat at the election of July 1868. When his return was assured, he wrote to his Irish friends:—

August 10, 1868.

I cannot pretend to answer your kind letter as it deserves—that is, in a quiet leisurely way. Judge from the enclosed slips in what a whirl I am. We do these things so quietly in England that you would think our proceedings tame, but I assure you we are all highly enthusiastic. I know that apart from politics you will be glad to know that my seat is as safe as anything in this uncertain world can well be, though we shall have a hard fight for it. My constituency is raised from 1400 to 5600! and I am busy teaching the new electors where Ireland is, what sort of people live there, and stirring up kindly feelings towards them. I may be wrong (for your friend De Visme Kane told me you were a sound Conservative), but it can only do good to arouse here some interest in Ireland. On Saturday (15th) I hope to wash my hands of politics, and

meet Robert Kane, and a few of our common London friends, at Grasmere, for a fortnight's walking about the Lake District. My intention is then to return with Kane to Ireland, and stay about there for a few weeks—in fact, until I am sent for here. If you are in Ireland in September, I think I may at least promise myself the pleasure of seeing you. How good of you to take all that trouble to see me in London! I keep my address (24 Grosvenor Mansions, Victoria Street) carefully out of all Court guides, &c., that I may have one quiet haven from political, legal, and nondescript bores. Alas! *they* find it out, and my friends miss me. I am very glad you are gone abroad; there is no change like it. I do hope it will restore Mr Ferguson thoroughly. Do not, I pray you, alter your plans in the least. You are almost certain to find me in Ireland any time in September. I would come abroad to you, but may not go out of call.

In March 1871 Henry Winterbotham was made Under Secretary of State for the Home Department—a high position to be attained so early. Yet he was to prove no exception to the irony of Fate. On the very day of his appointment one of his cherished friends, Mr Herbert, died; a little later his sister, Mrs Anstie, passed away; and on Christmas Day his father was suddenly removed by death. He too could say, Success is come! But ah! it comes too late!

> "The lips that would have loved to speak his praise,
> The hearts that would have kindled at his name,"

were gone from earth! He wrote dejectedly to his Irish friends:—

HOUSE OF COMMONS, *12th June* 1871.

I was very glad to receive your letter, and wish I had leisure to answer it duly. It is not so much time for writing as a

leisurely attitude of mind one wants for friendly correspondence. My life is a continual and varied activity. My work is too interesting to be wearisome, yet it pretty well exhausts me, especially now I am learning my trade. I am cherishing a dream of coming over to Ireland in the autumn with three or four friends of Kane's and mine, and settling at Howth or Killiney for a fortnight; but all is yet uncertain, and I must have a month in Switzerland first. If we come, it will be the last week in September. I fear you will then be away? I well recollect our walk over Howth, and all your extravagant imaginations of what I could do. Extravagant I still call them, repeated in your letter! but thank you for them, nevertheless. Certainly, without some higher aim than one's everyday life realises, one would never rise above it; so I let my friends, and myself too, sometimes dream. I have had forty interruptions in writing these few lines, and am ashamed to send them, yet will do so, that you may believe I value your kind thoughts of me.

I have spoken only of my active life, and it *is* active; but *you* will not think there is not a deeper, sadder undercurrent of thought and memory. My dear sister's death I felt much. That long Good Friday spent in her room, with my arms or her husband's round her as we supported her, and for eighteen hours watched her dying—that was a day not to pass lightly from the recollection.

The following year brought a more cheerful account of his life and prospects:—

You know the interest I take in public life, so I was easily persuaded by Gladstone to quit the Bar and take Office. It was no small sacrifice to me as a poor man. However, I owe no man anything, and have enough, and am, alas! unmarried, so it does not matter. I was a little tempted a fortnight ago by a proposal of the Duke of Argyll that I should go to India as legal member of the Viceroy's Council. £8000 a-year and *carte-blanche* to make laws for some 200,000,000 people was an attractive offer. But I resolved to stay at home. I enjoy my life whether in or out of office.

The last interview between the Fergusons and their young friend was at the Langham Hotel, a few months before Winterbotham's health finally gave way. They had been abroad, and on their way home stayed in London for two days only, and devoted the first to calling on the friends they wished to see. If absent, they left an invitation for breakfast next day at their hotel. Many friends assembled at the Langham on that morning, Henry Winterbotham being one. He looked ill and worn. "You are burning the candle at both ends," was the greeting with which they received him. "I am," he replied, "and I cannot avoid it. The Home Office all day; the House at night, and Society and the Shah for friends; little sleep, and much worry. But I will come to you soon, and you will take me to Howth and set me up. I shall write and offer myself as your guest the moment I am free."

Almost his latest letter was written in the same tone. He craved for companionship with the "quiet, wise, and good," and loathed the crowded *salons* where little interchange of serious thought or personal regard was possible.

I am always glad to see your handwriting and get a peep at Ireland [he wrote].

Many thanks for your very kind and oft-repeated invitations to Ireland. I assure you neither my regard for my Irish friends nor my interest in Ireland have grown in any degree less through absence, though the daily increasing multitude of acquaintances and of interests is a true dissipation to the soul. . . .

So you see how necessary it is I should come and see you once more. When we are turned out in earnest, and I am

once more a free man or gentleman at large, you shall soon see me.

What with latitudinarianism in thought, Home Office work for effort, and Society and the Shah for friends, my poor little life is fast losing itself in nothingness.

When the session was over he again wrote to say that his holiday must be a short one, and having heard that Sir Robert and Lady Kane, with their daughter, were on their way to Italy, he would propose to join them and see Rome, if the Fergusons would excuse his change of plans. They at once set him free, and were happy to think that he would visit Rome for the first time in such congenial society. After a short sojourn in Florence, Winterbotham pushed on to Rome, the Kanes proposing to follow a few days later. When they rejoined him it was evident to them that he was dying, and they telegraphed for his family, nursed him with loving care, sitting up all night; but before his brothers could arrive his soul had winged its happy flight

"To where beyond these voices there is peace."

He died on the 13th of December 1873, and lies in the English burying-ground at Rome.

From one of the tributes to him in the public press a few passages are cited, for the testimony borne to his worth is a true one:—

THE LATE UNDER SECRETARY FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT.

The Government, the House of Commons, and the Liberal party lose a man of unusual promise by the premature death

of Mr Winterbotham. He was decidedly one of the ablest among the younger men who have lately been rising into influence. . . . His amiable character and courteous bearing won him the friendship of many men who were compelled in public life to rank themselves among the constant opponents of his party. There can be no doubt that his early death withdraws from our political scenes one of the few young men of genuine promise who have appeared during recent years in the House of Commons.

In looking over, after his loss, the few which happened to be preserved out of Winterbotham's many letters, there was one in which he spoke with frank cordiality of Mr De Vismes Kane, whose friendship he had gained in Ferguson's house. Mrs Ferguson, knowing that he would like to read it, sent the letter to Mr Kane, stipulating only for its safe return.

There was little fear [wrote Mr Kane] that I should mislay the letter you so kindly lent me—for which I return you my best thanks. It is seldom that one has the opportunity of learning the unprejudiced opinions of others concerning oneself, and very rarely that of a friend given dispassionately. I was therefore much interested in getting this peep into the mirror of a friend's mind; and though every reference to Winterbotham is fraught with intense regret, yet the drawing out of one's love to him is pleasant. I don't know that I ever felt so perfect a sorrow for the loss of any one, not a near relation.

View it on what side you will, one's regret must be intense. Such characters are so rare; his public character being as estimable as his private one, and his great talents lighting up and manifesting the lovable traits and admirable proportions of the whole.

You have conferred a great benefit upon me, over and above those many others which I do not forget, in bringing me into contact with such an admirable nature, the memory of which hangs like a perfect model in my memory, of what a Christian

man may be in this complex state of probation in the nineteenth century.

Twenty-one years later, Mr Kane again spoke of Winterbotham in the following letter to Lady Ferguson, 18th November 1894:—

Thanks to you and my dear friend your husband, I enjoyed a good deal of delightful intercourse with Winterbotham. A more noble character I have never met,—so full of enthusiasm for everything that was good, and true, and kind; so wise, and yet so simple in his manners and habits. He enjoyed his visit to me here vastly, although I was in wretched health at the time. His liberality of sentiment was wonderful, and although his politics were very distasteful to me, his principles were such as I was sure would guide him aright in the end. Had he only lived to see Mr Forster, his friend, Chief Secretary for Ireland, how he would have strengthened his hands in discouraging the factious and false Nationalism which, by sedition, political corruption, and assassination, tried to make Ireland a Nation! Had Winterbotham survived to the present time, what an earnest Unionist would he have been! How readily he would have severed himself from Mr Gladstone's opportunist policy! It is a cordial to my heart to remember how noble an Irishman and how honest an Englishman were my friends, and how warmly I appreciated their characters.

Henry Winterbotham's younger brother William, who had come to Ireland with him in 1864, and had spent some time with the Fergusons in Donegal, in due course of time became a prosperous married man and the father of a promising family. In a letter to Mrs Ferguson he wrote thus of his departed brother:—

I am not likely to forget you and Dr Ferguson, and your warm affection for my dear brother, nor am I likely to value less your friendship now he is gone who first introduced us to

each other. . . . Henry was the brightness of my life, the most affectionate and also the wisest and best friend I had on earth. Every important step I have taken in life, from school to College, from Cambridge to my present work in town—he advised them all. All my best friendships I owe to him.

The question is sometimes asked nowadays, "Is life worth living?" To which an emphatic "Yes" should be returned. "We bless Thee for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life." For, in looking back upon its joys and its sorrows, it must be acknowledged that happiness largely predominates.

"'Tis better to have loved and lost than never to have loved at all,"

writes Tennyson; and Longfellow, when his thoughts reverted to departed friends, gives expression to the same sentiment:—

"Oh! though oft depressed and lonely,
All my fears are laid aside,
If I but remember only
Such as these have lived and died."

CHAPTER XVII.

1863.

AN ANTIQUARIAN TOUR IN BRITTANY.

"If all the year were playing holidays,
To sport would be as tedious as to work:
But when they seldom come, they wished-for come."
—SHAKESPEARE.

FERGUSON spent the long vacation of 1863 in diligent exploration of that marvellous region of north-western France which is penetrated by the Sea of Morbihan. His headquarters were chiefly at Vannes, Auray, Carnac, and Plouharnel. In the last place — the best centre for the antiquary—he stayed for about a month, making maps and plans, and investigations amid the tumuli and standing-stones — *menhirs*, *dolmens*, *alignments*, as they are locally called—of that mysterious region in Brittany whose past is still an unsolved problem. Imagine a district in which thousands of great stones, set up on end in numerous rows several feet apart, cover miles of country, and are known as *alignments*, and where great sepulchral monuments abound, each containing a central chamber formed by immense stones rudely ornamented, and

roofed by a mighty mass of stone. These, again, are often covered by a cairn of smaller stones, and over them a mound of earth which looks like a natural hill till it is ascertained to be a prehistoric sepulchre. Such are the objects around the Sea of Morbihan or existing on its islands. If stripped of its coverings the central chamber of great stones is named a *dolmen*. The *menhirs* are obelisks of unhewn stone, standing alone or in pairs, most of them fallen. One of the latter, of granite, had stood seventy feet aloft, "one of the greatest monoliths ever raised by the hands of man."

The problems which perplex the mind at the sight of these monuments are of deepest interest. What is their date? Who were the builders, and to what race did they belong? Had they a written language? Had they the use of metals? For what purposes did they erect these stupendous works?

Ferguson has left unpublished material descriptive of the megaliths of Morbihan, in which he speculates on their origin and affinities:—

> Throughout the west of Europe, from the Pyrenees to the Scandinavian peninsula, and from the Elbe to the extremest parts of the British Isles, are found those great stone structures popularly known as Druids' Altars, Giants' Beds, or Cromlechs. Brittany is particularly rich in these remains, and in Brittany they exist in greatest number and size in the department of Morbihan. Here we are astonished as well by the hugeness of the masses as by the vastness of the areas comprised in some of their combinations; for besides the common forms of stone table and detached obelisk with which we are familiar elsewhere, we find, in the Morbihan, ranges of great stones set on end, forming connected figures of miles in length, and covering vast scopes of ground in their alley-like perspectives.

Looking to the Eastern cradle, from which all the arts of life appear to have proceeded, we find in high India sepulchral structures of analogous character but of smaller dimensions. No connecting-link appears in the north of Europe; but in the region of the Mediterranean—on both sides, but chiefly on the African—traces exist which may be thought to unite the distant extremities of the chain.

With few exceptions these monuments exhibit no trace of any other art than that of transporting and upheaving great masses of rock. A few are distinguished by a peculiar species of ornamentation, and evince the skill of the stone-cutter; objects of metal have been disinterred from some, and on one structure of an analogous character Runic alphabetic characters have recently been discovered. With these exceptions, the problem everywhere presents itself to the mind of the observer, How have these blocks of ten, twenty, fifty, one hundred tons weight and upwards, been quarried, transported, and set on end or heaved up on their supports by men apparently ignorant of the use of metals—by men in so low a state of barbarism as to be obliged to use flakes of flint for their knives, and sharpened stones for their chisels and hatchets?

At Saumur, for example, where one of the greatest stone chambers in existence may be seen, a department of the museum—small but extremely interesting—is filled with objects drawn from monuments of this kind which have been disclosed and cut through in the formation of public works. A thin flint-flake of eight or ten inches in length, without difference of edge or back, point or handle; a boar's tusk stuck in the cavity of a morsel of bone; a stone hatchet, mounted by inserting its narrow end in the core, or perhaps in a slit cut in the side, of a deer's horn; a little cup, sometimes of unglazed pottery that plainly never felt the rotation of a wheel; a few beads of rounded shining stone, pierced for the reception of a string,—these, with fragments of the bones of men and animals, constitute the deposits actually found under the freshly-opened stone chambers around Saumur. Similar instances might be multiplied from hundreds of other museums, both insular and continental; but the writer instances the collection at Saumur in particular, because, whatever be the civilisation disclosed by the contents of the minor monuments, the

same may be ascribed to the builders of the great one, between which and the smaller *dolmens* of the neighbourhood there exists no distinction save in size. . . .

Tradition generally ascribes these works to mythical if not to purely imaginary beings. Stonehenge, reported by Polydore Virgil to be the sepulchre of Aurelius Ambrosius, and some of the Irish megalithic sepulchres referred by bards of the twelfth century to personages of a prehistoric period, are the principal if not the only exceptions. The reference of any monument to gods, to giants, or to fairies, raises a strong presumption against its being the work of the people who ascribe to it such an origin. The arms and implements found in or figured on them have as little place in actual or traditionary use as have the names of those who erected them in local nomenclature. All general information on the subject points to the conclusion that the megaliths are the work of a race extinct or merged beyond the power of identification in some succeeding wave of population before the commencement of the historic era.

It will be observed that Ferguson inclined to the belief that the Breton monuments were pre-Celtic. Yet he weighs carefully the speculations of others—notably of Algernon Herbert, who propounded the theory that after the withdrawal of the Roman legions from Britain Druidism regained much of its power, and that the erections in stone were symbolic, and exponents of the Arthurian myths. Ferguson desired to compare the monuments of western France and south-western England, and on his return journey visited Wiltshire, seeing Stonehenge, Abury, and Old Sarum. In his account of the Morbihan, he describes Gavr-Inis on one of its islands. Those who have visited New Grange, near the Boyne, may realise the Breton structure. The stones which form the walls and roof in both are covered with ornamentation very similar in

taste and design. Irish tradition makes New Grange the tomb of the Great Dagda—the last Tuatha-dé-Danann prince—conquered by the Milesian Celts, who came to Erin by way of Northern Africa and Spain.

The department takes its name from the *Mor-bahan—i.e.*, the Little Sea or Estuary of Vannes, forming an inner gulf of the Bay of Quiberon. . . .

Two of these islands [in this sea] bear conspicuous monuments — that is to say, Gavr-Inis, lying a little within the narrows, and Longue Isle (*Mis hir*), fronting Locmariaquer and the embouchure of the Auray. . . .

Gaour-Inis, or Giant's Island [as Gavr-Inis is called by the people], argues at all events a non-Breton origin, just as *Coir Gaour*, or the Giant's Dance, applied to Stonehenge, would imply that the Welsh who gave it that name in the time of Cambrensis knew nothing of its real authors. The monument—a mound containing a galleried chamber—stands on the southern end of the island. It has been often and well described both by word and picture. The mound, although it has been stripped down to the stones covering the sepulchral chamber, still presents an imposing elevation, and the stones are of great dimensions. What attracts the visitor, however, is not the size of the monument, but the remarkable character of the sculptured ornamentation with which all the stones constituting the side-walls, with one exception, and some of the flagstones forming the floor of the gallery, are profusely carved. It is the *bizarre* and South-Sea-Island-like character of this ornamentation that makes the first and most lasting impression, and transports the imagination, even more forcibly than the rough blocks of earlier structures, to the infancy not only of art but of man himself in the west of Europe. Design of the same general character is, however, to be found on similar monuments in Ireland, and also, as the writer is assured by reliable testimony, in the district of the Pyrenees. Concentric arcs, spirals, zigzags, parallel carved lines, leaf-like and branch-like patterns, interspersed with triangular objects, which appear designed to represent stone hatchet-heads and are conventionally called celts, are the prevailing forms. . . .

In all the multiplicity of carvings there is but one which can with certainty be recognised as the representation of a known object. It is a stone hatchet, mounted in its handle, very rudely engraved on a spiral stone introduced to give height to one of the parietal props of the corridor. It is noticeable from the form of the haft, which is reverted at top, so as with its backward curving point to give *appui* to the small end of the stone wedge projecting through the aperture of the handle. For in the mounting of the stone hatchet the blade is inserted in the handle, not the handle in the blade. But this form of haft, with its reverted top, is something peculiar, not seen in the sculptures, medals, or remains, so far as is known to the writer, of any other part of the world, and is here noticed as confirming the truth of another and very remarkable representation of the national weapon as seen on a neighbouring monument which will be spoken of hereafter. Great blocks of stone form the floor as well as the roof and walls of the structure. These flooring-stones overlap, so as to give a gradual ascent to the chamber; and there seems some reason to surmise that another vault exists beneath. However this may be, it is evident that the work was planned and put together with much deliberation, for some of the carvings are returned on the sides of the stones in situations which could not have been reached after the blocks were built in. The decoration extends even to the flooring-stones. The last step, forming the threshold of the chamber, has sculptures on its upper surface of the same character as the side suggests, and presents on its edge the primitive herring-bone pattern which enters so largely into what is conventionally called Celtic ornament. . . .

Though stripped of so much of its covering, the tumulus of Gavr-Inis is still a mound of grand dimensions, and is seen overtopping the islands and promontories which surround it from all sides of the Morbihan. . . .

The description which Cæsar gives of the towns of the Celtic tribes who occupied the Morbihan in his time reads with interesting significance: "The sites of their towns were such that, being placed on the very ends of the little tongues and promontories of the land, they neither afforded access to assailants on foot by reason of the rushing in of the tide

from the main sea, which here takes place every twelve hours, nor to naval attack, because at the recess of the tide the vessels should go to wreck in the shoal-water; and so, in both ways, siege operations were impeded. And whenever, by force of great constructions, these difficulties were surmounted, and the sea excluded by dams and embankments, and these got up to the height of their town walls, so that they began to apprehend the event, they would bring up a crowd of shipping, of which they had great abundance, and transport themselves and their goods to some neighbouring town, where they would avail themselves of the same local facilities for their defence."—De Bell. Gall., III. xii.

If Gavr-Inis, then, as this consideration would suggest, was the site of a town in Cæsar's time, was this tumulus, and were the other great neighbouring monuments of the same kind, in existence? or have they been erected since? and if then in existence, were they Gallo-Venetian works, or the works of an earlier race, over some of whose sepulchres the Gallo-Veneti erected their dwellings? It is authentically known that the Veneti of Cæsar's time had the use of letters and of iron. In some of the arts of life, as in navigation, they were in advance of the Romans, having dispensed with the use of oars, sailing by the adjustment of helm and rigging, and using chain cables. They fought with missile weapons, and it may be presumed, like other Gauls, with the sword. We nowhere read of the stone hatchet as in use by them or any other Gaulish tribe. It appears incredible that works betokening a period and a taste so savage could have been Venetian of Cæsar's period. There is still less reason to refer them to the Gallo-Roman civilisation which succeeded, and lasted down to the obscure era of Arthurian romances. . . .

Thus each step of the investigation seems to throw us farther back into the night of history, and to invest these rude remains with a more surprising interest.

Gavr-Inis has been the subject of frequent description. Not so the neighbouring monument on the Isle Longue, of which some account will now be given. It stands on the extremity of the island, looking southward over the narrows, at the entrance of the Little Sea, and westward over the roads of Locmariaquer and embouchure of the Auray. From

a distance it appears a grey heap of loose stones with some traces of a terraced outline, and a hummock rising from the centre. . . . Whatever be its epoch, it has existed through a sufficient number of centuries to excite our wonder at the cohesion which still keeps its uncemented stones in their places. This, too, is due not to the size of the materials, for the stones of this part of the structure are such as a moderately strong man might easily lift, nor to any niceties of adjustment, for there is nothing of the cyclopean character in the masonry, but to the durable character of the plan itself. The construction is simply a cairn of dry stone surrounding a solid conical pillar, the external rings of which are laid with stones of a moderate size, placed endwise round a well-packed core. Yet to the height of from four to six feet this dry-stone pillar still emerges from the surrounding ruin, and may yet for centuries continue to shake its shaggy coat of lichens in the gales from the Atlantic. . . . Neither ornament nor any kind of inscription could be discovered in the interior. . . .

It is on this slightly undulating, well-tilled, and thickly-peopled tract behind and on either side of the town of Locmariaquer that some of the most remarkable megalithic monuments in the world are to be found. From the *Pieries Plattes* on the outer shore, and the *Butte de Cæsar*, just within the estuary on the south, to the long mound called the *Mané Nelud* on the north, over a tract of about a mile square, there are scattered groups of covered, half-covered, and uncovered sepulchral chambers, and of prostrate pillar-stones, of astonishing size and singular interest, heightened by the impression, which at each step acquires more and more the force of conviction, that in these vast masses we look on the remains of a primeval state of man.

Of the *Pieries Plattes* little need be said. The name indicates ignorance of its origin in those who have so designated the monument. . . .

The only sculpture which could be reached shows that the carvings on the *Pieries Plattes* are true to the barbaric type of Gavr-Inis, only somewhat more symmetrical in execution. . . .

At the foot of the mound two mighty obelisks of unhewn

stone have fallen from their places, and lie in fragments pointing north-east. We here begin to observe the employment of the *Menhir*—that is, the long stone, set up singly or in pairs, after the manner of the Egyptian obelisk, in front of the mound sepulchre. Noticing these features in passing, let us for the present leave the *Butte de Cæsar*, to return to it after some preliminary matter shall have better qualified us to appreciate the results of its recent exploration.

To the left of the *Butte de Cæsar* lies the town; and to the left, or north and west of the town, extending southward to the sea-shore at several points, are vast remains of sepulchres, from which the tumuli have been removed. They give no sign, however, either in difference of feature or in sculpture, to distinguish them from the hundreds of similar remains scattered throughout all the country, and crowning almost every eminence in sight. They are huge; they are marvellous; they are rugged and silent. Associated probably with the mound formerly covering one of the greatest of these denuded *dolmens*, or table-stones, as the discovered chamber is popularly called throughout Brittany, formerly stood another *menhir* of grand dimensions, now lying in fragments on the western outskirts of the town. Its direction in falling has been towards the east. In the same direction has also been the fall of the greatest of *menhirs* of the Morbihan, which lies at a distance of about five hundred paces, adjoining the noble tomb called the Merchant's Table. . . .

The giant obelisk which formerly raised its seventy feet of unbroken granite beside that tumulus is an unrivalled *menhir*. When erect and whole, this was one of the greatest monoliths ever raised by the hands of man. The great stones in the basements of Persepolis and Solomon's Temple, the Egyptian obelisks (Cleopatra's Needle only excepted), the shaft of Pompey's Pillar, the Albert block which we failed to transport from the quarries of Aberdeen, fall short of it in every dimension. . . .

It is impossible to contemplate this mighty ruin without wonder at the natural force which has thus lifted and dispersed

so vast a mass, tossing its fragments like stubble hither and thither, and still greater wonder at the power of men's hands and the grandeur of their thoughts embodied in its original erection. . . .

Who was the merchant? Had he brought with him the knowledge of commerce as well as of agriculture? or is the name a merely fanciful appellation, disguising the ignorance of those who bestowed it? . . .

Of all the megaliths of Brittany this is the most perfect in design and workmanship, and bespeaks the farthest social advancement in those who erected it. Yet it belongs to an epoch when the stone tomahawk was the weapon of a personage of distinction; and with most persuasive appearances of truth, it *seems* to belong to an epoch when the first steps in agriculture were still wonderful and memorable in the eyes of men just emerging from the condition of hunters and shepherds. . . .

Thus we see the unmounted celt figured on the stones of Gavr-Inis; the mounted celt on the stones of *Mané Nelud;* the mounted and plumed celt on the Merchant's Table; and here, in the *Butte de Cæsar*, the same feature appears in an inscription, the value and curiosity of which can hardly be over-estimated. One stone only is inscribed. . . .

Within the *Butte de Cæsar* were found not fewer than ninety-three stone-hatchets in hard tremolith; eleven ditto in jade, broken each in two; nine large jasper beads, some of them of the size of hen-eggs; one large hatchet-head in green jade, nineteen inches long; another in white jade; various small beads, and an oval annular disc or flat ring, cut out of one piece of jade. . . .

These were the only objects; and the chamber being hitherto inviolate, these objects may be taken as the things most precious to the personages there interred. The chamber in the *Butte de Jumiac* and *Mont St Michel* at Carnac yielded only objects of the same character. . . .

As regards the name of Cæsar, it has been applied indiscriminately to this [the *Mané-er-l'hroëk*], to the *Butte de Jumiac*, and to various other localities along the coast about the en-

trance to the Sea of Morbihan—in commemoration, no doubt, of that day, fatal to the power of the Veneti, when Julius and his army occupied all the eminences whence they could command a view of the rival navies engaging at their feet. Pilot Joseph, who brings the visitor from Auray, will tell how the wind failed the *Govenstach*, while the banked galleys from the Loire broke their line, and the Roman sergeants with their halberds cut the tackling, and let down their leathern sails about their ears; and will point to the beach beside the *Pieries Plattes* as the spot where the victorious warriors of Cæsar landed after their battle.

Two impressions arose in the writer's mind on the view of the Carnac *alignments:* one, that the monument is representative of some memorial object; the other, that it is a species of *stadium* in stone, as the Wiltshire *cursus* appears to be in earth. . . .

These considerations tending to refer the Carnac lines to Mont St Michel, we return with a renewed interest to inquire what is known regarding this great stone-heap. It has recently been explored in a systematic and, so far, eminently successful manner under the direction of M. Galles, Sous-Intendant Militaire of the department. . . .

Here, if anywhere, we might expect an answer to the questions, Had they the use of metals? Had they the use of letters? So far as the voice of this one chamber is heard, it gives a hesitating answer in the negative to the first, and distinctly says No to the second, question. Hatchet-heads of jade and other stones precious in material, exquisite in form and finish, beads and trinkets of jasper drilled and polished, are the only artificial objects found among the heap of calcined bones and cinders which covered the floor. . . .

No lapidary could produce work of greater symmetry or finer finish than is displayed on the celts. Some of them have the lustre of bronze, others that of ivory, combined with the semi-transparency of alabaster. With excellent taste here, as at Newcastle-on-Tyne, the building converted to the uses of the Antiquarian Museum is itself an object of old historic interest. But these unique collections of jade weapons disinterred from the cairns of Mont St Michel and Jumiac,

preserved in adjoining cases, give the tower of the Constable Clisson at Vannes even superior interest to the Northumbrian keep of the Plantagenets. . . .

It would seem that, as we go farther westward, we penetrate deeper into the night-time of history, and find ourselves among works which, as they proceeded from the younger energies of mankind, are proportionately on a more gigantic scale.

In a paper read before the Royal Irish Academy on December 14, 1863, Ferguson adduces fresh reasons for assigning a very early date for the megaliths of the Morbihan :—

As regards the probable age of the megalithic monuments of Brittany, the writer noticed the fact that Cisalpine Gaul was peopled by tribes from the region of Transalpine Gaul, corresponding with modern Brittany, so early as the first and second centuries after the foundation of Rome; and that with one exception, near Trent, no monuments of this character appear to have been observed anywhere in the valley of the Po. On this subject the writer invited information, and submitted that, if in fact the Gaulish family did not leave such memorials of their presence in Lombardy, the conclusion would seem to follow that we must seek for the people who practised those modes of sepulture in an earlier epoch than that of the Celtic migrations. The singular taste and barbaric aspect of the objects appear to the writer to refer them to a race having more of the characteristics of the Indian and Polynesian offshoots from the parent seats, than of any of the existing nationalities of Europe.

This was also the idea of Sir Frederic Burton, as will appear in the following letter :—

I have read with great interest the last paper of yours you so kindly sent me on the Locmariaquer monuments. It especially interests me, because I have very long been under

the strong belief that all remains in Europe of this order were not Celtic at all, but long ante-Celtic, and are perhaps amongst the most ancient relics of man's art that exist. To find that you, so deeply versed in all that can be known about them, incline to that opinion, greatly fortifies my own conviction.

I should scarcely have guessed at the strange *cartouches* being shields, but it seems to me a most happy conjecture.

May I now call your attention to shields very similar in form, and in some cases really identical, on the monuments of Egypt. For immediate reference look in Wilkinson's 'Ancient Egyptians,' vol. i., from p. 339 to end of volume, and particularly pp. 348 and 388. No doubt Rossélini and Lepsius would afford similar examples.

I have an idea, but I may confuse these Egyptian recollections in a bad memory, that some of the present African tribes carry such shields too. The nearest to the supposed shields of the Breton monuments are those in the hands of enemies of the Egyptians.

On leaving France in 1863, Ferguson, in a poem, "Adieu to Brittany," afterwards included in his 'Lays of the Western Gael,' gave expression to the attraction which he felt for the country in which he had sojourned, and for the kindly, simple, pious Breton peasants:—

ADIEU TO BRITTANY.

Rugged land of the granite and oak,
I depart with a sigh from thy shore,
And with kinsman's affection a blessing invoke
On the maids and the men of Arvôr.

For the Irish and Breton are kin,
Though the lights of Antiquity pale
In the point of the dawn where the partings begin
Of the Bolg, and the Kymro, and Gael.

But, though dim in the distance of time
Be the low-burning beacons of fame,
Holy Nature attests us, in writing sublime
On heart and on visage, the same.

In the dark-eyelashed eye of blue-grey,
In the open look modest and kind,
In the face's fine oval reflecting the play
Of the sensitive generous mind.

Till, as oft as by meadow and stream
With thy Maries and Josephs I roam,
In companionship gentle and friendly I seem
As with Patrick and Brigid at home.

. . . . .

Be it thine in the broad beaten ways
That the world's simple seniors have trod
To walk with soft steps, living peaceable days,
And on earth not forgetful of God.

Nor repine that thy lot has been cast
With the things of the old time before,
For to thee are committed the keys of the past,
Oh grey monumental Arvôr!

Yes, land of the great Standing Stones,
It is thine at thy feet to survey
From thy earlier shepherd-kings' sepulchre-thrones
The giant, far-stretching array;

Where, abroad o'er the gorse-cover'd *lande*,
Where, along by the slow-breaking wave,
The hoary, inscrutable sentinels stand
In their night-watch by History's grave.

Preserve them, nor fear for thy charge;
From the prime of the morning they sprung,

When the works of young Mankind were lasting and large
As the will they embodied was young.

. . . . .

Farewell: up the waves of the Rance,
See, we stream back our pennon of smoke;
Farewell, russet skirt of the fine robe of France,
Rugged land of the granite and oak!

The Vicomte de la Villemarqué translated the poem into French, and published his version in an article in 'Le Correspondant,' which told of Ferguson's investigations, and amusingly described the speculations of the peasants as to his proceedings. The attractive personality of Hersart, Vicomte de la Villemarqué, author of 'La Légende Celtique,' 'Barzaz-Breiz,' and other works mainly concerned with Wales and Brittany, will appear in his subsequent correspondence, which also evinces his appreciation of Ferguson's genius. The "Adieu to Brittany" and its French rendering were sent to Burton, who thus acknowledged them:—

My dear Mrs Ferguson,— . . . I have been unable to send a line to thank Sam for the gift. Let me therefore, first of all, have this gratification, and will you tell him from me, and with my heartiest regards, how very welcome it was, and with what thorough pleasure I read both the account of his researches in Brittany, and the stanzas which I was delighted to find coupled with the name of Villemarqué.

These last are indeed delightful, and contain some lines so eminently characteristic of their author that they thrilled me through, as his dear earnest voice has done when reading his own verses. There are thoughts and modes of expression in these lines which could only come from an Irishman, and amidst all Irishmen, only from him, and I cannot tell you how

deeply they affect me. One thing, however, these verses, as well as the paper read before the Irish Academy, do, and that is to make me regret more than ever my ill luck in not having been of your party last year. I should certainly have enjoyed it to the full, and profited by it instead of by my compulsory stay in England, having contracted an illness which deprived me of the power of working for several weeks.

It was very nice in Villemarqué to publish the verses, prefaced by those charming lines of Lamartine, which certainly have the music of true poetry.

Your letter from home after your return smarted me a little, when I found that you had passed through London without my seeing you. I think I should have forced myself on you and Sam, on your journey to Stonehenge, at all events. My lonely visit to it and Abury in 1859 remains among my pleasantest recollections, and these would have been furbished up to the most brilliant point by wandering amongst those weird stones with you and him.

The Vicomte de la Villemarqué wrote to Ferguson from Keransker in October 1863:—

CHER MONSIEUR,—Votre aimable lettre m'a fait le plus grand plaisir; je suis ravi que notre Arvôr vous ait plû; les vers d'adieu que vous lui adressez me sont allés droit au cœur, et j'ai traduit *extempore* les quatre premiers en français:—

"Terre de granit et de chêne,
Je te quitte avec un soupir,
Mais en partant je veux bénir
Ton visage où mon cœur s'enchaine."

J'attends la suite avec impatience; mais vous avez écrit un peu vite et effacé un mot, pour en mettre un autre que je n'ai pu lire, dans le second vers de la troisième stance:—

"Be the . . . of fame."

Vos derniers vers si beaux et si justes,—

"Holy Nature attests us, in writing sublime
On heart and on visage, the same,"—

rappelent ceux que Lamartine nous prêta, lors de notre *meeting* breton et gallois de 1838 :—

"Lorsqu'ils se rencontraient sur la mer ou la grève,
En souvenir vivant d'un antique départ,
Nos pères se montraient les deux tronçons d'un glaive
Dont chacun d'eux gardait sa symbolique part;
'Frères, se disaient-ils, reconnais-tu la lame?
Est-ce bien là l'éclair, et la trempe et le fil?
Et l'acier qu'a fondu le même jet de flamme
Fibre à fibre se rejoient-il?'
Et vous nous disons ô fils des mêmes plages,
Nous sommes en tronçon du vieux glaive vainqueur;
Regardez-nous aux yeux, aux cheveux, *au visage*,
Et reconnaissez-nous à la trempe du cœur!"

C'est ainsi que les grands poètes se rencontrent, sans s'être cherchés.

Je vous remercie de l'offre de votre mémoire sur les antiquités de Karnak; je le lirai avec un plaisir infini. Je vous remercie également pour les communications de Mr. le Dr Todd; malheureusement elle arrivera trop tard, car mon mémoire sur la cloche de Hival, à laquelle celui de la cloche d'Armagh aurait pu servir d'éclaircissement, va paraître dans peu de jours. Je ne vous en prie pas moins d'offrir mes remerciments au Dr Todd avec l'assurance de mon profond respect. Veuillez aussi me mettre aux pieds de Mistress Ferguson, "with the kind regards" de Mme. de la Villemarqué, et croyez au plaisir que j'ai eu à faire la connaissance d'un homme comme vous.—Votre bien dévoué,

VTE. DE LA VILLEMARQUÉ.

KERANSKER, 27 *novembre* 1863.

CHER MONSIEUR,—Merci de vos beaux vers; ils m'ont ravi: les Irlandais doivent être fier d'avoir un poète qui chante si bien. Hélas! le nôtre n'est plus. Combien je regrette qu'il ne lui ait pas été donné de vous lire! Il aimait tant la vraie poésie et il aimait aussi l'Irlande. Connaissez-vous son poème intitulé "Le Combat de S. Patrick"? Il était triste de voir qu'aucun écho flatteur ne lui venait de votre pays.

Voulez-vous que le mien vous en envoie un de vos "Adieu à la Bretagne"? "La Revue de Bretagne et Vendée" vous en serait bien reconnaissante; je tâcherais d'y traduire de mon mieux votre pièce, mais en prose; le peu que j'ai mis en vers m'a paru si au-dessous de l'original que je n'ai pas continué. Vous avez appris la merveilleuse découverte de Mané-er-l'hroëk? J'ai vu la première pierre gravée; on dirait qu'elle l'est d'hier: par malheur elle est brisée et un des hieroglyphes n'est pas très distinct; mais l'écusson est complet. Ceux qui en portaient de semblables devaient être frères de langue, en Arvôr comme dans [*illegible*]. Êtes-vous allé à Belle-île, que nous nommais en vieux breton *Inis Guidhel?* Avez-vous aussi visité la paroisse toujours appelée *Guidel?* (Vous savez que les Gallois vous appelent *Gwyddêlod.*) J'aurais été curieux de connaître si la physiognomie des habitants conservé quelque chose de vos compatriotes. Mon ami Jacob Grimm croyait que le dialecte Vannetais est celui qui offre avec l'Irlandais le plus de rapport; c'est possible, mais de bien loin. Quelle perte nous avons faite dans cet excellent et si savant homme! Nous venons de nommer M. Pertz pour le remplacer; j'aurais préferé un philologue. M. Whitley Stokes m'écrit de Madras, qu'il va publier le 'Félire d'Oengus'; ce sera bien heureux et un grand service rendu. Je ne veux pas terminer cette lettre de remerciments, Monsieur, sans vous prier de mettre mes hommages aux pieds de Mme. Ferguson; ma femme lui envoie aussi ses meilleurs compliments. Recevez les miens avec l'assurance de mes sentiments dévoués et reconnaissants.

VTE. DE LA VILLEMARQUÉ.

Others among Ferguson's friends in France—notably M. Henri Martin, the author of a 'History of France,' three times crowned by the *Académie*—held a different theory as to the race who were builders of the great monuments in Brittany. M. Martin wrote from Wales in October 1863—

Je suis bien satisfait que ma lettre pour M. de la Ville-

marqué ait pu vous procurer d'utiles et agréables relations avec cet excellent et très dévote Celtisane, qui vous aura donné les meilleure directions possible en Bretagne. Je vous remercie beaucoup du très curieux dessin que vous m'avez envoyé ; je pense que vous l'auriez pris tous le monument qu'on appelle vulgairement *la table de César* à Locmariaker, et d'ont j'ai quelques dessins à Paris avec lesquels je comparerai le vôtre à mon rétour. Si c'était d'un autre monument il m'intéresserait beaucoup d'en être informé.

Je ne pense pas que ces monuments appartiennent à une époque anté-historique, et je crois que vous pouvez trouver la preuve du contraire assez près de chez vous, dans les *caves* de Dowth et de New Grange. Les symboles qui s'y trouvent et qui par rapport avec ceux de Gavr-ynys en Bretagne et de Kivik en Scandinavie sont entièrement celtiques, à vrai dire, de type à une foule de combinaisons de lignes ornamentales qu'on rencontre sur tous les objets gauloise, bretonne, et irlandaise.

Pour moi, je ne doute aucunement de la tradition, qui, chez vous, attribue ces monuments aux Tuatha-dé-Danann—race purement celtique. Je viens de me confirmer encore dans cette opinion en examinant en Écosse les nombreux monuments figurés qu'ont laisses les anciens *Cruithne* ou Pictes, et qui se rapportent aux mêmes types avec quelques variantes. Avec cela est *merely Celtic remains*. Je crois que les figures que vous avez dessines sont plutôt des symboles que des caractères d'écriture.

Before continuing the correspondence which ensued on Ferguson's discovery of previously unobserved markings on the stones which formed the sides and roof of the Breton sepulchral chambers, it may be well to explain that they are almost invisible at mid-day, and require the morning or evening light to render them apparent to ordinary observers.

When Ferguson wrote to M. René Galles telling of

his discovery at *Mané-Nelud*, that officer, on proceeding to the monument at mid-day, failed to detect the markings on the stones. But he returned at night with a lantern, and then saw all that he had been told of; and on carrying on further explorations, he discovered many new objects of interest.

Thus experience teaches that inscribed stones should be examined at the hours when the sun is high or low in the heavens. Then the incised objects cast a shadow. This knowledge conduced to very early rising on the part of Ferguson and his wife. Their custom was to order coffee to their apartment at earliest dawn, and desire a carriage to be in readiness to convey them to the most distant objects which they proposed to examine. These were often many miles away from their hotel, in which case they took note of conspicuous objects on the way, such as the spires of churches, by which, towards evening, they could guide their returning footsteps—for they dismissed their conveyance as soon as their destination was reached. They carried sketch-books, materials for making rubbings, candles, and matches, and diligently utilised the light of early morning. As the day advanced they procured bread and fruit at the nearest hamlet, and rested in the shade of tree or rock till the sun declined, when they resumed their investigations. On the return journey they crossed the country in steeple-chase fashion, over fields and fences, aiming directly at some tower or spire. When on the road, they would walk with the peasants by the side of their carts, and converse with them as

far as their limited acquaintance with the Breton *patois* would admit of. Happily, kind feelings can be communicated without an extensive vocabulary. Often have these good and friendly people offered them a lift on their carts, which the recollection of Clonmacnois experiences led them to decline. Sometimes, if they neared the peasant's home, they would be invited to enter and taste the cider, which is the beverage of Brittany, for vines do not flourish on its granite soil. It was delightful to witness the cleanliness, comfort, and taste displayed in very humble abodes: flowers adorning the windows, snow-white curtains and table linen; the food a kind of pancake made from rye, eaten with a light and somewhat acid cider, and fresh fruit, generally pears, grown on the gable of the cheerful little home.

On Sundays they attended at the parish church—too small for its pious population; and as no other service was held, they took their seats on a bank outside. The worshippers—all of the peasant class—who could find no room within, knelt in attitudes of rapt devotion outside,—men on one side, women on the other,—and joined in the service, which could be distinctly followed through the open door and windows.

And whenever a "Pardon" was held the Fergusons were sure to be present. This assemblage of peasants in their picturesque costume combined religious services with the festivities of a fair, including a dance in the open air. Yet the Breton is a grave and sober personage, pensive rather than merry—very dissimilar

in appearance, character, and type to the Frenchman of other provinces. He is tall, rather fair than dark, slender, narrow-faced, blue- or grey-eyed, with an air of refinement and sensibility. Millet in his "Angelus" has drawn to the life the Breton peasant. He reminded us rather of the Celtic Irish than of the broad-headed, dark-eyed, vivacious, pleasure-loving population of Paris and other parts of France.

When Ferguson and his wife left this district for the more populous and fertile parts of Brittany, they found resident gentlemen living on their estates whose proffered courtesies would have been enjoyed had time permitted. At the Château of Keransker, the home of the Vicomte de la Villemarqué, they took up a book then but recently published, O'Curry's 'Manuscript Materials of Irish History,' and were surprised to find it carefully annotated and its margins filled with notes and references. They were grieved to think how few of their countrymen had mastered the knowledge it conveyed as fully as the Vicomte de la Villemarqué, in whose well-stocked library they observed other books referring to Ireland better studied than by Irishmen at home.

This nobleman's letters show how wide was his culture and ardent his enthusiasm :—

KERANSKER, 14 *juin* 1864.

Voilà longtemps que je n'ai entendu parler de vous ; donnez-nous donc de vos nouvelles et de celles de votre cher femme. J'espérais que le Dr Todd m'en donnerait, mais sa lettre est toute scientifique ; quant à M. Stokes, il est trop loin, et ne parle que philologie.

Où en êtes-vous et vos travaux d'explication sur les inscriptions de Mané-er-l'hroëk? Je n'ai pas reçu la note imprimée que vous m'aviez promise à ce sujet, et n'ai que votre première communication du 9 novembre 1863, à votre Académie. J'attends de nouvelles découvertes pour dire moi-même mes suppositions à [*word illegible*] une des inscriptions, et je parlerai des vôtres à l'occasion. On m'apprend de nouvelles découvertes faites dans le tumulus de Grubelz (Kruk-Belz) à l'aide de fonds que j'ai obtenues du comité des travaux historiques pour la société polymathique du Morbihan, société à la quelle—j'ai été assez heureux pour être rapporter—a été accordé, outre ces fonds, le grand prix annuel sur toutes les sociétés archéologiques de France.

Je pense que M. Galles vous a tenu au courant de ses dernières feuilles: je vais aller les visiter avec mon ami Henri Martin, et vous en parlerai plus en détail. Présentement, je m'occupe du théâtre chez les nations neo-celtiques, et je ne trouve rien à dire de votre Irlande: est ce ignorance de ma part, ou défaut de pièces de la vôtre? Tandis que les Celtes du Cornwall et de notre Armorique sont très riches et que ceux de Galles l'ont été, vous me paraissez tout-à-fait pauvres en ce genre littéraire: n'a-t-on donc jamais joué chez vous de *miracles plays*? ou, si l'on en a joué, n'en reste-t-il aucun? Je m'étonnerais qu'une littérature où le dialogue joué un rôle remarquable, et où la légende est si dramatique, n'ait pas eu de pièces de théâtre proprement dites. Soyez assez bon pour satisfaire ma curiosité à cet égarde; je vous en serais très obligé.

Notre Bretagne où je suis [*absent*] depuis deux mois, vous est très reconnaissante de vos "Adieux" qui l'ont charmée. Je regrette que le stance sur la *parole d'honneur* des Bretons soit arrivée après-coup; à vous dire le vrai, j'avais parfaitement compris le mot "*word*," mais voulu faire un extra-sens patristique de propos délibéré: le poète qui promit une langue celtique éternelle dans ce pays breton à ceux qui l'habitent leur faire le compliment qui tes touche le plus. De même en Galles, et, quand j'y songe, en Irlande aussi, par ma foi! ne criez-vous pas: *Erin-go-brath!* et cela sera; sinon dans l'île même

que l'Angleterre opprime, au moins en Amérique : *ubi bene ibi patria.* 'The Book of Irish Ballads,' à la tête du quel je trouve un nom que j'aime, me ravit, et aussi la collection de Ch. G. Duffy ; toutefois je regrette que les poètes n'avaient pas écrit en irlandais.

M. Henri Martin, devoted to Celtic studies, wrote thus on the subject a few years later :—

PARIS, 3 *janvier* 1867.

CHER MONSIEUR ET AMI,—Excusez moi d'avoir été si longtemps de répondre à votre bonne lettre, et à vous remercier du très intéressant specimen et des renseignements que vous m'avez envoyés sur vos découvertes. Les principales de ces figures sont en effet toutes pareilles à celles de Gavr-ynys, et ont évidemment la même valeur symbolique. Les autres sont elles de fantaisie, ou ont elles un sens qui nous est inconnu ? Nous ne sommes pas en mésure de le dire. En tous cas, voilà une preuve de plus de l'identité des Celtes primitifs de Bretagne avec ceux d'Irlande, corroborant les traditions relatives au dieu Crom, qui se retrouvent çà et là en Bretagne. Je viens de lire l'essai sur les dolmens de M. de Bonstettin. C'est un homme de mérite, et qui a fait de belles publications archéolgiques, mais son système d'attribuer les dolmens aux Finnois est absolument inadmissible. L'opinion de l'ethnographe et naturaliste français Quatrefages est bien plus probable, en ce qui regarde les Finnois. Il leur attribue ce qu'on appelle l'âge de pierre primitifs, les fossiles humains, et les instruments grossières du diluvium de la Somme et des découvertes analogues, et ces Finnois primitifs se servaient prolongés à travers les siècles jusqu'à l'âge des cavernes. Les premiers Celtes aurient trouvé en Occident des groupes plus du moins nombreux de cette race.

Il me paraît probable que les Celtes ont dû occuper l'occident et le nord de l'Europe, entre vingt-cinq et vingt siècles avant notre ère. On commence à croire de plus en plus que les habitations lacustes leur appartiennent entièrement.

Veuillez recevoir tout mes remerciments, ainsi que Mme. Ferguson, de l'aimable acceuil que vous avez bien voulu faire,

à mon jeune compatriote M. H. Gaidoz, dont le zèle pour les études celtiques mérite encouragement. Je lui ai envoyé depuis de nouvelles lettres de recommendation de la part de l'excellente Miss O'Mara, et j'espère qu'il en aura fait bon usage. Il n'a pas commencé par les agréments de votre climat en arrivant l'hiver en Irlande, mais il a été fort heureux sous d'autres rapports, et il sera dédommagé sous celui-là, quand il verra la verte Erin dans sa parure printemière. Il est probable que les traces que vous trouvez en Irlande de la singulière coutume des sauvages américaines si elle a éxisté chez les Cantabres, vous vient de l'élément ibère, plus ou moins mêlé aux Celtes d'Irlande. J'écrirai à ce sujet à mes amis du pays basque.

J'ai été bien heureux de pouvoir me mettre pendant quelques jours à la disposition de Mme. Ferguson et à la vôtre, d'une façon si agréable pour moi-même, durant votre dernier séjour en France, et je compte bien que cette année nous aurons le plaisir, ma femme et moi, de vous revoir à Passy, et que je pourrai vous conduire rendre visite aux Pharaons, sans sortir de Paris. Vous savez que le musée de Memphis nous arrive. J'aurais grande satisfaction à accepter votre bonne hospitalité et à compléter sous votre direction ma première reconnaissance de l'Irlande, mais je ne puis encore arrêter de projets prochains parce qu'après m'être remis au travail et avoir passé l'hiver à mettre en train une œuvre d'histoire populaire ; il est possible que, comme repos et santé, on me conseille une course au soleil du Midi. J'ai eu des nouvelles de notre ami La Ville-marqué de Pau, où il est avec sa femme, toujours bien souffrante. À vous cordialement et mes dévoués hommages à madame.

H. Martin.

The papers read before the Royal Irish Academy by Ferguson after his return to Dublin, and printed in their 'Proceedings,' give the further results of his researches in Brittany, which led to the examination of hitherto unopened tumuli by the French Government.

CHAPTER XVIII.

1863–1886.

HIS WORK AS AN ARCHÆOLOGIST.

"Men must endure
Their going hence, even as their coming hither;
Ripeness is all."
—SHAKESPEARE.

ON his return from Brittany in 1863 Ferguson established himself for a time at Salisbury, to delight his æsthetic sense with its cathedral. Keenly sensitive to architectural beauty, he never failed to visit, when within reach, these majestic churches, the glory of Christendom, each of them—to use his own words—a

Builded prayer,
With majesty of strength and size,
With glory of harmonious dyes.

From Salisbury he explored Stonehenge, Old Sarum, and Abury. In their search for the latter place—for Abury seemed to be unknown to the people of the district—Ferguson and his wife drove through the forest of Savernake, glorious in its autumnal beauty, with wide-spreading trees, almost as old as the anti-

quity they were in search of, verdant grass, grazing deer amid the fern, soft sunshine, realising Shakespeare's words:—

"Under the greenwood tree,
Who loves to lie with me,
And turn his merry note
Unto the sweet bird's throat;
Come hither, come hither, come hither,
Here shall he see
No enemy,
But winter and rough weather!"

Abury, or Avebury, is an earthwork not far from Marlborough, with standing stones surrounding it, of which a few are still *in situ*. Though worthy of a visit, it is inferior in interest to Old Sarum or to Stonehenge —termed by Inigo Jones, who visited it in 1655, "the most notable antiquity of Great Britain."

The massive stones—trilithons, as they are called—transported from a distance—tradition says from Africa —which stand in groups or lie prone on Salisbury Plain, erected at an unknown time, by unknown builders, for a conjectural purpose, powerfully impress the imagination of the beholder. The grassy upland on which this weird erection stands, its solitude, its mystery, the speculations to which during the centuries it has given rise, make Stonehenge probably the most impressive object on British soil. Henry of Huntingdon in the twelfth century wrote of this "marvel of Britain, where stones of amazing bigness are raised in manner of gateways, so that gateways appear erected over gateways; nor can any one find out by what

contrivance stones so great have been raised to such a height, or for what reason they have been erected in that place."

The lintel or impost of the central trilithon had fallen before Ferguson had first seen Stonehenge. "Those who had seen it lying at the foot of the leaning pillar-stone which once formed one of its supports," he observed, "will remember the emotion excited by its vast size, and the surprising height to which it had once been elevated."

Hardly less impressive is the great Wiltshire earthwork known as Old Sarum. It is surrounded by a deep trench, as is customary in these erections. During the Roman occupation of Britain a fortification, now in ruin, had been built by this military people on Old Sarum. When the Normans conquered the land more than a thousand years later they built a church on its site, which has crumbled away. But the earthwork stands, and is likely to stand, as uninjured by Time as it has been hitherto through countless generations.

In his "Adieu to Brittany," Ferguson has recorded the impressions made by his antiquarian wanderings in 1863:—

I have stood on Old Sarum: the sun,
With a pensive regard from the west,
Lit the beech-tops low down in the ditch of the Dun,
Lit the service-trees high on its crest;

But the walls of the Roman were shrunk
Into morsels of ruin around,
And palace of monarch and minster of monk
Were effaced from the grassy-fossed ground.

Like bubbles in ocean they melt,
O Wilts, on thy long-rolling plain,
And at last but the works of the hand of the Celt
And the sweet hand of Nature remain."

In December 1864 Ferguson, desirous to verify some of his previous observations, revisited Avebury and Stonehenge, and wrote to his wife from London his impressions of the winter landscape he had seen in Wiltshire:—

I enjoyed the visit to Amesbury and the plain more than I can tell you. It was a delicious day; a warm sun and a frosty surface: the scenery about Amesbury the very ideal of English finished culture, a grand old church, a truly beautiful palace (the seat of Sir E. Antrobus) among noble woods —delicious meads and a clear abundant river,—all this, associated with a quiet, quaint, cheerful little town, made me in love with the place; and indeed the civility and respectability of every one made me almost in love with the people. I never took a more exhilarating walk than across the down to Stonehenge. Among others who came up while I was engaged was the lady of one of the great county potentates who resides at Dorrington or Duddington Hall. Madame was so obliging as to ask me to go to her house, but time did not admit. I spend this evening with Burton, and to-morrow with Mallet, and will be with you, *D.V.*, on New Year's Day. I trust that on returning to my own happy home I may find you, the source of all its happiness, at the head of a cheerful household.

Before he had learned the art of making casts, Ferguson's expeditions to sites already visited, to verify earlier observations, were frequent. His movements on these occasions being rapid, his wife did not always accompany him. The enthusiasm, the pleasure, and sometimes the disappointments of the ardent investigator, appear in his letters.

IMPERIAL HOTEL, CORK, *29th July* 1872.

There is no inducement for you to join me since the commencement of the rains, which have been extraordinary even for Cork. I must look forward to meeting you at home in the course of five or six days. . . .

My business here is heavy, and will keep me at this address, where they make me very comfortable. I have our old sitting-room, littered, much to the disgust I daresay of the housemaid, with casts, in pieces to fit my portmanteau, of large legends. One of them is the Ballinahunt inscription, from near Annescaul, whither I went from Tralee. Nothing more delightful could be imagined than the drive by Camp, and the Madman's Glen, and up from the main road towards the gloomy hollow which you will remember on the right going from Tralee, where lies the Loch of the Shadow, with Cuchullin's house on the mountain above. At foot of this range is Ballinahunt: there, fastened up to the gable of Landers's house, is the stone. I got it all covered in a tight-fitting suit of grey that showed off its charms of notch and digit to entire perfection, when, drop! spit! spatter! down it came; and there was nothing for it but to join the horse and family in the kitchen. There was Mrs Landers, surrounded by six daughters and two out of four sons—four others dead—spinning wool for home-made frieze and flannel — excellent stuffs, woven in the parish. I wished to bring away some of the flannel at 1s. a "bundle"—*i.e.*, a short yard—but the stuff was at the fulling-mill. It would make fine boys' summer wear. You remember General Edwards's suit at Lucerne, the same stuff. However, when the deluge was in part abated, it behoved to leave, and I had to divide my cast and put it piecemeal, dripping wet, and alas! all too tender for the rude shocks of jolting ruts and fords, into the narrow prison of my portmanteau. It preserves the digits, but the vowels are almost obliterated. Pity me! Yes; dear Molly, you and I will yet pay another visit to Mrs Landers and bring away every notch as perfect as when it left the chisel, of "Dogred," an "Angel" of the old, old Church of Ireland, for that's the inscription.

[Wales,] Emlyn Arms, 18*th August* 1872.

I am reasonably well, though I have gone through a good deal of fatigue, and hope to return to you about Wednesday not worse in health and greatly improved in knowledge. You thought I knew every digit on the Bridell Stone; but the cast has taught me how vain is the attempt to decipher such a legend in the open air. I have secured the Clydai and Dycoed inscriptions also, and have opened a mine of information on the buried end of the pillar at Cilgerran. Nothing can exceed the fineness of the weather yesterday and to-day. If to-morrow continues as fine, I shall not leave my work imperfect, but take Tuesday for travelling homeward. The beauty of the country exceeds description. Alas! my own organisation is so *ébranlé* that I move through the Paradise as wretchedly as Adam after the Fall. If I had my Eve here she would be very happy. The good people of the house all remember her, and bestow a double kindness on me for her sake. Mr Davis is the civillest of hosts. . . .

I am learning things of curiosity and historic value, and have no regrets but that you are not with me and our vacation beginning.

Ferguson's correspondence shows how enthusiastically he devoted his leisure to the discovery, preservation, and elucidation of Ogham inscriptions. This cryptic writing consists of notches cut on the edges of pillar-stones,—those on the angles being vowels, while consonants cross the arris on either side. Oghams are most abundant in southern Ireland and Wales, but are not unknown in other districts. A few examples are found in Scotland and south-west England, and one in the Isle of Man.

A paper in 'Blackwood,' November 1886, on "Sir Samuel Ferguson," gives a pleasant account of one of his expeditions, and illustrates the excitement of

Ogham discovery and the uncertainty of deciphering the legend:—

Sir Samuel Ferguson's contributions to archæology deserve a more detailed notice than it is possible to give in a short paper such as this, but the writer would gladly convey some impression of the charm of his companionship on an archæological tour. The *bonhomie* and genuine humour of the man brightened the long hours of a wet day in a comfortless Irish inn, quite as much as the love of nature and inexhaustible lore, with which his memory overflowed, enhanced the delight of hours spent amidst the wild cliffs and islands of our Atlantic coasts. The poetic nature, "deep possessed with inward light," the "fancies springing from a heart at ease," made an atmosphere of sweet content about our friend, the influence of which was shared by all. We can picture his happy excitement at the moment when the first discovery was made of the Ogham inscriptions in the treasury of Queen Maeve, at the site of her royal residence in Roscommon. . . . The treasury of the queen, it appears, was a grotto, to which in later days a second chamber was added on as porch or ante-grotto, to form the roof of which some long stones were carried from the adjoining burial-ground. In 1864 Sir Samuel and Lady Ferguson explored this place, which is situated in the wide tract of grazing lands lying around Tulsk, in the county of Roscommon. . . . Sir Samuel, eager to explore the inner cave, left Lady Ferguson behind in the ante-grotto, where she remained in the darkness awaiting his return. Having provided herself with matches, she lit a candle and commenced the examination of the stones of which the artificial portion of the cave was built. Her eye at last caught sight of markings on the edge of one, now fixed into the roof. . . . Delighted with his wife's discovery, Sir Samuel could exclaim, "Freoch, son of Maeve, is here;" for the Ogham letters are, we believe, allowed on all hands to signify *Freocci maqi medffi.*

Next morning he returned to Dublin, and the first thing he did on arrival was to unpack the precious rubbing he had made. Going over it carefully, he found to his dismay that one letter in the inscription was uncertain, indistinct, and

blurred. There was just time to catch the night train back to Roscommon. Without a word he started, and by twelve o'clock next morning was again at work in the cave. This time his labour was well rewarded: the doubtful letter came forth in the most satisfactory manner, and Sir Samuel returned the happiest of human beings.

As soon as Ferguson acquired the art of making paper casts which perfectly reproduced every marking on the stone, the necessity for revisiting Ogham sites no longer existed. The process is simple. Blotting-paper, a sponge, a soft brush, a pot of paste, and a little water are all that the manipulator requires. The stone is freed from lichen, and the paper applied and slightly damped. It is then gently beaten with the brush till the paper, reduced to pulp, is pressed into every crevice. Should it tear in the process, a fragment of fresh blotting-paper is applied, damped, and patted. When the inscription is completely covered, a coat of paste is applied, a second sheet of blotting-paper laid on, and the process repeated. Occasionally a third sheet may be necessary. As soon as it is nearly dry, the cast must be drawn gently from the stone. When quite dry, every marking will be distinctly visible. It can be looked at, convex or concave, for the cast has attained the solidity of cardboard.

In a letter to the Secretary of Council, Royal Irish Academy, Ferguson enlarges on the advantages which these casts possess for the study of Ogham inscriptions:—

For the purposes of study, as well as for facility of arrangement and economy of space, casts in paper, of adequate

strength, are much preferable to reproductions in plaster or metal. To enable the student to give an undivided attention to such objects, it is necessary that they should be easily moved, so as to be placed in convenient lights and points of view. The difficulty of so dealing with heavy masses has greatly detracted from the value, for practical purposes, of the inscribed stones, which have from time to time been brought from their sites in the country, and placed in public and private museums. Any one undertaking the systematic study of such a collection must be prepared to move considerable weights, must work under various inconveniences of posture, and submit to frequent interruptions dependent on changes of light and shade. The employment of paper duplicates, while affording entire freedom from these disadvantages, with the additional facility of a surface possessing uniformity of colour, will also, it is hoped, dispense with the temptation to further disturbance of the inscribed monuments still occupying their ancient sites.

Ferguson read his first paper on Oghams before the Royal Irish Academy in 1864. Its subject was the inscriptions found in the cave at Rathcroghan. The earthworks yet standing, which mark the site of the pagan capital, are insignificant; but at the adjoining cemetery, known as the *Relig-na-ree*, an erect pillar-stone is said to mark the grave of Dathi. This provincial king—nephew of Nial-Nine-Hostages, who carried St Patrick a captive to Ireland—had a history in which Ferguson was much interested. In a paper on the legend of Dathi, he thus enlarges on that prince's burial-place at Rathcroghan:—

At about three hundred yards to the south-east of *Relig-na-ree* stands the pillar-stone thought to indicate the grave of Dathi, the last Pagan Monarch of Ireland, who is recorded to have been buried at Rathcroghan A.D. 428. When seen by O'Donovan in 1837 it was prostrate, lying beside the little

mound on which it has since been erected. It is undoubtedly the *coirthe dearg*, or red pillar-stone, which tradition affirmed to be the monument of Dathi, when Mac Firbis wrote in A.D. 1666. Its weight is such as would make it unlikely that it should have been transported from its original site, so that some probabilities point to this spot as being the sepulchre of Dathi. It is a little mound of about eighteen feet in diameter. The earthen field-fence has been diverted so as to avoid passing through it. The tumulus itself hardly rises above the surrounding embankment.

As if conscious that, for so great a personage, this must seem a very inadequate memorial, the old writers have been careful to assign a reason for its insignificance and obscurity. The reason suggested for the meanness of his sepulchre is that the ex-king and hermit, Formenius, in storming whose cell Dathi met his death by fire from heaven, had prayed, on that occasion, that Dathi's reign might be short and his monument not conspicuous. On this it may be remarked, that although the hillock answers well enough to the imprecation, the pillar-stone is the largest block remaining in or around *Relig-na-ree*—standing six feet high from the ground, in which it is sunk three or four feet. It is a rude plate of red sandstone, either brought from a distance or found as a boulder on the surface of the limestone; but the former suggestion is the more probable, as it shows no marks of water-wearing.

The interest aroused by the discoveries at Rathcroghan induced Ferguson to follow the footsteps of Dathi through Switzerland and the upper valley of the Rhine by Lakes Constance and Wallenstadt to Ragatz and Pfeffers. On the traces of the warrior-king in these regions Ferguson at a later period made a communication to the Academy, from which the following passages are taken:—

The oldest historic writings of the Irish allege that after the death of Nial of the Nine Hostages, who is said to have been

slain during a predatory expedition into Gaul about A.D. 405, his nephew and successor, Feradach, afterwards called Dathi, having followed his uncle's example in again invading the continent of Europe, was killed by lightning at the Alps. The date of this event is given by the majority of Irish chronologists at A.D. 428, being the first year of Leoghaire, Dathi's successor in the monarchy. Leoghaire's accession, however, is placed by the compiler of the Annals of Boyle at A.D. 426.

The direction taken by Dathi, further than that he followed in the track of Nial, and was killed somewhere at the Alps, is not directly indicated in the older books now known to us.

Nial is said to have been slain on the banks of the Loire; and hence it has been supposed that Dathi's death took place somewhere in France. An expression, however, in the poem ascribed to Torna Eigeas, said to be a contemporary, which we find incorporated in the account of Dathi's expedition, in 'Lebor na h'Uidhri,' taken in connection with the then condition of Roman affairs in the sub-Alpine provinces of the empire, offers a more tangible ground for conjecture. The bard, contrasting the then notoriety of the place of Dathi's death with the obscurity of his place of burial, refers to his death as having occurred in *rig iath—i.e.*, "in royal land"—an expression which, in its context, appears to point to some portion of the imperial territory, the Cæsar being usually designated in Irish compositions of this class *ri domain*, or King of the World. Roman territory at and on this side of the Alps, in Dathi's period, with the exception possibly of a narrow line of communication, accessible only by permission of the garrison of Lyons, and not likely to have been essayed by such invaders, can hardly be said to have existed anywhere from the Mediterranean to the valley of the Upper Rhine. Though the consul Ætius still held the central and northern parts of Gaul, the Goths at that time, with Toulouse for their capital, occupied Narbonne. The Burgundians had extended their kingdom from Dijon to Geneva and the western parts of Switzerland. The central plain of Switzerland was overrun as far as Lake Leman by the Alemanni. Helvetia had just undergone the second of its *ruinæ* or desolations, and possessed nothing to

tempt the cupidity of an invader. Its chief attraction indeed at this time was for Christian hermits and recluses. The passion for ascetic seclusion was then at its height in southern Europe. A colony of monks, observing the rule of the Egyptian desert, had been led to the islands of Lerins, off the Ligurian coast, between Toulon and Nice, where our own Patrick is supposed just about this time to have spent some years in probationary discipline. From that extremity of the Maritime Alps the practice of anchoritism appears to have spread into those places made desert by the irruptions of the barbarians; and it will be convenient here, in reference to subsequent matter, to state that, in Helvetia especially, numerous recluses, including persons of noble birth, are recorded to have set up their hermitages, some in the wildernesses of the Jura, some in Soleure, and others among the ruins of the ancient Lausanum, whence the modern Lausanne takes what may be called its second origin. Rhætia, however, with Coire, at the head of the Upper Rhine valley, for its western administrative centre, remained Roman till a later period in the same century; and this state of facts, although absolute certainty cannot be claimed for it, may justify us in taking a first tentative step in search of any vestiges that may survive of Dathi's progress, in that region. . . . The principal roads which invaders desiring to reach any part of Italy from these islands should pursue were as clearly defined in the fifth century as they are now; for the passes through which alone roads could at any time be carried are limited in number and unchangeable in position. If, therefore, the nearest point at which sub-Alpine Roman territory could be reached was, as has been suggested, in the district of the Upper Rhine, there would be a reasonable presumption that the route by Coire and the passes of the Splügen would be that entered on by Dathi in this expedition. And this indeed is the route which early British and insular travellers are best known to have frequented. Coire itself claims the British Lucius as founder of its church in the end of the second century, and still preserves evidence of early Irish influence in its remains of Christian art. . . .

The Upper Rhine valley, to which we have been conducted

by this concurrence of hints and inferences, debouches on the Lake of Constance at Bregentz (*Brigantium*), where the highway from Italy through ancient Rhætia divided, one branch leading northward to Augsburg and thence to the Lower Rhine, and the other, skirting the southern shore of the lake, westward and southward to Zurich (*Turicum*). A traveller to or from Coire might, however, adopt an alternative and shorter route by the defile of the Lacus Rivarius, now Lake Wallenstadt, which, leading eastward from the head of the Lake of Zurich, past the opening of the valley of Glarus (*Clarona*), through a depression at the end of the Appenzell Alps, opens on the left bank of the Rhine about forty miles above Bregentz. The tribes who in Ptolemy's time occupied the point of junction, the *Saronici* and *Rigusci*, have left their names in the town of Sargans, where the railway junction now exists, and in Ragatz, five miles higher up, now the well-known health-resort for the adjoining baths of Pfeffers, the Fabaria of the middle ages. Geographers are agreed in placing the *Castra Rhætica* of the Latin writers in the tract about the lower end of Lake Wallenstadt, in the district of *Gastern;* and the small towns of Tertzen and Quarten on its southern, and Quinten on its northern bank, are accepted as marking the sites of Roman military stations. At Mollis, another small place between Quarten and Glarus, there was found in 1765 a hoard of Roman coins, dating from the first to the third century, all indicating the existence of a well-frequented line of communication by this route in Roman times. Pfeffers claims for its founder a Bishop Firmin or Pirmin, once of Metz. The name is not preserved in the abbey itself, but in the adjacent village of Saint Perminsberg, which stands higher up the mountain, both places being in the immediate vicinity of Ragatz. Leaving Ragatz for Zurich by the route which has been indicated, one passes through or near a number of towns and hamlets in the neighbourhood of Lake Wallenstadt, of which, for the purpose of this inquiry, it will only be necessary, in addition to the places already mentioned, to notice Wangs, Flums, Wallenstadt, which in the last century was Wallestadt, at the head of its lake, and Grinau at the head of the Lake of Zurich.

We are now in a condition to judge how far what has been premised may be found in accordance with the story of Dathi, as it exists in its oldest-written form in our now well-known eleventh-century manuscript, the 'Lebor na h'Uidhri.' The text is accompanied by a gloss in a handwriting, as O'Donovan judged, nearly equally ancient. It may indeed be a contemporary transcript of an older edition of the text already glossed. There are other editions of the narrative in later Irish manuscripts; but though these be later in transcription, and some of them in compilation, it is not to be concluded that they are necessarily derived from less ancient material.

Nathi, son of Fiachra, took [reigned over] Erin, and invaded to the Alp mountains. Formenus, king of Thrace, came on pilgrimage to the Alp mountains at that time. There was made by him a castle tower, and sixty feet its height, and eleven feet outwards from him to the light, and he was himself in the middle of the tower, and perceived not a ray of the light. Then came Nathi to the tower. Then the followers of Nathi demolished the tower. And Formenus perceived the wind [outer air] about him. Then Formenus was snatched from them in a flame of fire a thousand paces from the tower [*i.e.*, a thousand paces from [that] mountain downward is Formenus]. And Formenus prayed the co-Godhead that the reign of Dathi might not be of long continuance, and that his [*i.e.*, Dathi's] grave might not be conspicuous. The king enjoyed life only while he was destroying the castle, when a flash of lightning came from heaven on him so that he died. Amalgaid [*i.e.*, there were two Amalgaids—*i.e.*, Amalgaid son of Fiachra, and Amalgaid son of Dathi] then took the command of the men of Erin, and carried away the body of his father with him. Nine battles were routed before him in the east. [The battle of Corpar, b. of Cinne, b. of Faili, b. of Miscail, b. of Larrand, b. of Corde, b. of Moli, b. of Grenis, b. of Fornar. These are the battles which were won around Nathi, through the exhibition of him to the hosts, and he dead.] In the Decies of Tara then Amalgaid died. Then the body of Dathi was carried to the west, and he was buried at Cruachan. A company of four men of noble rank brought the body with them.

There is no ecclesiastical foundation of any Formenus or Firminus in any part of the whole region of the Alps but the one ascribed to Firmin at Pfeffers; and, in point of fact, that church of Pfeffers does stand about the distance in question below the village and height of St Perminsberg in the region to which the inquiry *a priori* has so conducted us. This fact

of the existence of two places—one the hermitage of the recluse on the height, and one the church, ascribed to a founder of the same name, on the lower slope of the mountain —has obviously been regarded as a circumstance necessary to be noted in the story. Mac Firbis thus refers to it in his version of the legend: "Formenius then went a thousand paces down from that mountain and dwelt in another habitation," both statements importing the existence at St Perminsberg of an anchorite called Forminus, Formenius, or Firminus, previous to the foundation of the great church of Fabaria.

The gloss-writer, having thus pointed at a place lying on the track which Dathi has been, so far, presumed to have followed, goes on to give other topographic indications which, so far as resemblances of names after the lapse of so many centuries can be relied on, appear to confirm the first identification, and to localise the scene of the invaders' retreat in the district which has been described as extending from Ragatz and Sargans to the head of the Lake of Zurich. . . .

It seems difficult, in presence of so considerable a number of agreements between the Irish lists and the existing local nomenclature, to doubt that a tradition of Dathi having penetrated as far as the neighbourhood of Ragatz, and of his followers, after his death, having made their retreat by way of the Wallenstadt valley, existed in Ireland previous to the date of the 'Uidhre' glosses.

Having the attention thus quickened to the value of the Irish material, it will be less tedious to proceed with its remaining incidents. The gloss-writer, at the close of his list, adds: "These are the battles which were won around Dathi, through the exhibition of him to the hosts, and he dead." This refers to a statement not found in 'Lebor na h'Uidhri,' but detailed with much curious minuteness as well as picturesqueness by Mac Firbis:—

When the men of Erin perceived this [the death of Dathi] they put a lighted *sponc* in the King's mouth, in order that all might suppose that he was living, and that it was his breath that was coming out of his mouth. . . . Amhalgaidh, the son of Dathi, then took the command of the men of Erin, and he carried the dead body of his father with him, and he gained

nine battles by sea, and ten battles by land, by means of the corpse; *for*, when his people exhibited the body of the king, they used to rout the forces that opposed them.

Strange as this device for inspiring terror into an enemy may seem, it is not without parallel in what Florus has told us of the centurion Domitius, or Cronidius, who, in the Dalmatic war, in Augustus's time, attached some kind of chafing-dish, filled with combustibles, to his helmet, so that the superstitious Mysians conceived some supernatural being to have come amongst them crowned with flames.

What has been said of other recluses will have lessened any surprise at the presence of the royal hermit in this story. Nor is there anything in the description of his tower in the text inconsistent with authority or example. His tower may be inferred to have been a round one, agreeably to the instruction for building fortress towers given by Vitruvius. In that part where he dwelt, presumably on the ground-level, as being the object of a predatory attack, there was no access for light; whence we may infer that the door to the interior existed at a considerable height from the ground, being the method of construction found in all the oldest examples of such detached towers, here and on the Continent. The facility with which the soldiers of Dathi broke through the wall may be accounted for by a circumstance, noted by the gloss-writer, and repeated in other editions of the story, that the tower was built "of sods and stones," meaning possibly that its stones were cemented with clay, or, more probably, that on an understructure of stone a clay upper storey was erected. The definite dimensions given in the text, from which the building appears to have been twenty-two feet in diameter and sixty feet high, will, to most minds, convey the impression that the story, wild as it is, originates in some foundation of fact. . . .

Here I leave this curious inquiry, professing only to have shown grounds for believing that the writer of the glosses in 'Leabhar na h'Uidhre' intended his readers to understand that such an expedition had been led by Dathi as far as St Perminsberg, and that his followers, after his death, effected

their retreat through the places in that neighbourhood which have been enumerated.

Since reading the above Paper the writer learns from the Rev. Pfarrer C. Ricklin, Wallenstadt, that *Farnor* and *Lunden* are two places in that neighbourhood—the first lying in the direction of Quinten, on the north side of the lake; the second near Mols. The case, therefore, would appear at present to stand thus. The gloss to 'Uidhre' gives the names :—

Corpar . . .	(not recognised).	
Cinni or Cingi . .	possibly (?) the present	*Wangs*, east of Wallenstadt.
Fale	" "	*Wallenstad*, locally *Wale* (stad or stadt).
Miscal . . .	(not recognised).	
Larrand . . .	apparently the present	Glarus, formerly *Clarona*.
Corde (elsewhere Corte)	" "	*Quarten*, on south shore of Lake Wallenstad.
Moli	" "	*Mols*, east, or *Mollis*, west, of Quarten.
Grenis . . .	" "	*Grinau*, at head of Lake of Zurich.
Fornar . . .	" "	*Farnor*, west of Wallenstad, on north shore of Lake.

Besides these, other accounts mention—

Colum . . .	possibly (?) the present *Flum*, east of Wallenstad.
Lundun . . .	apparently *Lunden*, between Mols and Quarten.

All being in one neighbourhood, on the route hither from St Perminsberg, where the gloss appears to fix the site of Firminus's cell and the death of Dathi.

The circumstances of Dathi's death are still vividly preserved in the tradition of the country. The pillar-stone supposed to mark his grave stands near Cruachan, in the county of Roscommon, on the estate of Mr French, D.L., of Clooneyquin, who writes as follows :—

February 15th, 1882.

The place where Dathi is said to have been buried, near the *Relig-na-ree*, was a portion of our old ancestral estate, and I remember, when a boy, I was often told that a king of Connaught was buried there who had been killed by lightning at the foot of the Alps. I was told by the late Fitzstephen French, M.P., that they [Dathi's troops] were said to have placed the dead body on his horse, and fastened on his helmet a sponge saturated with some imflammable liquid, which struck terror by night into the hearts of his enemies.

At a later period, with reference to a proposal of Colonel Chichester, a landed proprietor in that district of Roscommon, to open and examine the supposed site of Dathi's interment, Ferguson expressed his views as follows:—

Dr Wright has placed in my hands your note to him of the 1st inst., enclosing the communication of my friend Mr French respecting the Dathi monument at Rathcroghan.

I am not myself disposed to disturb sepulchral remains, although, if an examination of the tumulus regarded as Dathi's grave were undertaken by others, I would take a lively interest in their proceedings. There seems no doubt that Dathi was interred at Rathcroghan. The older tradition, however, would put the site in the *Relig-na-ree* rather than under the long stone. As I have said, I shall be prepared, if any exploration in either place be set on foot—which I do not myself recommend—to take the necessary steps for securing the presence of some competent representative of the Academy.

Let me ask your acceptance of a paper of my own on the Dathi legend, which probably will interest you as owner of these remarkable remains of early times at Rathcroghan.

To Captain (afterwards Sir) Richard F. Burton, Ferguson wrote on the subject of Scandinavian Runes, treated of by Burton in his book on Iceland. These had many points of resemblance to Ogham writing. Instead of selecting, as the Ogham writers did, the

sharp edge of a stone, the runic scribes made a stem-line, from which, on either side, the marks and notches which constituted their occult alphabet branched off. Captain Burton subsequently visited the Land of Midian, and thought that he had there discovered true Oghams, of which he gave a description in Ferguson's house. The markings, though curious, could not be considered Oghamic.

The following letter, addressed to Captain Burton, then in Trieste, was written in February 1877:—

You have contributed a very interesting addition to our scanty knowledge of Runes and Oghams. I was quite unaware that your work on Iceland contained information so exceptionally rare and valuable. Having read the book, I have also to thank you for clearer views both of the land and of the people of Iceland than I previously possessed. What most strikes me is the deterioration in both respects as compared with the fairly fertile country and heroic men of the Sagas. . . .

I cannot credit the theory of British extermination, and would imagine that concurrent streams of Norman and Celtic blood mingle largely in the noble product—the Englishmen of our own day. . . . You will ask why do I travel into these side-paths instead of coming straight to the fact of runes at Emesa? Well, I will tell you. If time had allowed, I would have desired to look up the history of the kingdom of Jerusalem to see how far Norman influences may have extended themselves in North Syria. . . . Neither Rune nor Ogham, so far as I could discover, exists in Normandy or Brittany. Oghams there are of neo-post-Roman date in South England and Wales; and I travelled lately into Cumberland in search of one which formerly existed there in one of the quarries worked for the purposes of the wall, and most probably legionary and Roman, but it had disappeared: so that while I must leave the third and fourth century Runes of Mr Stephens and

their Greek origin in questionable suspense, I would expect a Latin origin for the Ogham forms, and hope, in some of them, to find memorials of the pre-Patrician Scotic Christians. It is, however, too soon to generalise. I remember having been much struck with Donaldson's idea of Etruscan influences extending into Scandinavia; and on a clay sepulchral urn found with objects of decidedly Etruscan origin in the Tyrol I have seen the Palm-rune either genuine or imitated. There are many repetitions of character, but not enough of difference to ground any certainty of their being used alphabetically. You may be sure, in anything I may have to write on the subject, I shall not omit to refer to your Syrian examples, and would beg you in the meantime to inquire how far eastward you can trace their use.

Runic inscriptions were objects of curiosity to Ferguson whenever he had opportunities for their study. He had made a cast of the Rune engraved by Varangians from Scandinavia, on their way to the Crusades, on the lion which now stands at the gate of the Arsenal at Venice, having been brought thither from Constantinople. The cast, carefully wrapped up, was carried across the Splügen in a snow-storm which compelled the travellers to abandon their carriage and continue the Alpine journey in a sledge. The precious cast lay across their knees. But the snow penetrated through all defences. They were thoroughly wet, and the cast, reduced to pulp, became worthless. As they reached the summit the newly-risen sun glorified the landscape. Switzerland spread beneath them clothed in untrodden snow. It was a sight never to be forgotten. The horses, harnessed tandem-wise to the sledge, were urged forward by the postilion at tremendous speed. The splendid spectacle of the Alpine

chain, the exhilaration of so rapid a transit, was a pleasurable excitement. It was only on reaching Splügen that the travellers became aware of the danger they had surmounted. The telegraph-posts, buried in snow, had their tops only visible; half an hour later these would have been obliterated, and with them all indication of the road they skirted. At Splügen the sledge was exchanged for a carriage. This had to be abandoned on reaching the Via Mala. The pass was choked with *débris*. Trees had fallen; some were hanging over the narrow path suspended by their roots. It was necessary to clamber on foot over the Via Mala, not without peril from falling stones and water issuing from the mountain-side, and to await at its lower end a conveyance sent for to Thusis. Here they had to spend a day or two in bed till their clothes were dried, the luggage and everything they wore being saturated with snow-water.

Ferguson and his wife, being accustomed to adventures in pursuit of objects of archæological interest, made light of discomforts. Returning a few years later through the Brenner Pass after a sojourn among the Dolomites, they halted at Franzenfeste, and digressed from the beaten track to visit a castle which had a remarkable tower, on the high table-land above the Brenner. They were conducted thither by their guide through the dry bed of a mountain torrent. Springing from rock to rock, and boulder to boulder, up a steep ascent, was exhausting work. When they reached

the summit they found a fine castle, a handsome church, and a hamlet to which there was no other approach! The conveyance in which they had hoped to be driven back in comfort proved to be a kind of wheel-barrow, to which trunks of trees were loosely attached to act as a drag. In this they made their precipitous descent, frightfully jolted, and thankful to reach the bottom in safety. Assuredly antiquarian ardour was seldom more severely tried!

Round Towers, especially such as were of the Irish type, had great attraction for Ferguson; but his keenest interest was in Ogham-inscribed stones. On receiving one of his contributions to the Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy on this subject, Sir Thomas Larcom wrote: "'Oghamica' is a most valuable paper; more and more inscriptions turn up year by year; something more than funereal epitaphs must yet be discoverable from them. They are the hieroglyphics of our cave temples and tombs."

This expectation seemed to have been realised when a cave at Monataggart, Co. Cork, was discovered by the Rev. Dr Quarry, rector of Donoughmore—the parish in which Monataggart lies. This cave contained several stones bearing Ogham inscriptions. "It is, I apprehend," wrote Ferguson, "with possibly one exception, the first occasion of an Ogham text furnishing a means of comparison between lapidary and manuscript forms which might offer a feasible ground for predicating the age of the former." Elsewhere he further observed: "I am also satisfied that

in it we possess an entire epigraph, certain in all its characters, and perfectly reliable as an example of the orthography of the Oghamic school of writing."

A correspondence—too technical for these pages—ensued between Ferguson, the Bishop of Limerick, Professor Rhys, Fellow of Merton College, Oxford, the Rev. D. H. Haigh, D.D., of Erdington, and Dr Whitley Stokes, then resident at Calcutta.

At the time when Ferguson first visited Monataggart, the method of making casts was not known to him. When he afterwards learned the process, he appealed to his friend Dr Quarry to make for him at Monataggart one of these authentic models. The rector of Dónoughmore, now Archdeacon of Cork—a dignitary venerable for his goodness, his learning, and his power as a speaker and preacher—is a philosopher, a profound theologian, and a man of genius. Ferguson in the rhymed epistle which he wrote to him alludes to Dr Quarry's varied attainments, and amusingly portrays his own eagerness to possess the casts of the newly-discovered stones:—

> But thou who, nothing careful whether this
> A digit be, or whether that a notch,
> Incumbent o'er the pure-aired Domnach Mór,
> Tend'st the sparse flock, and much involved in thought
> Ponderest the problem whether they for thee
> Exist subjective, as the Sage of Cloyne
> Once deemed, or thou objectively to them
> Bear the good tidings that their souls desire—
> Good tidings borne effectual either way—
> Or, challenged by Inaugural Address,
> From Science's Olympus thundered forth,

Inquirest whether Grandsire Molecule,
Parent at large of protoplastic wares,
Potential all in all, be not, himself,
Creature of inference and argument,
As much as good old Paley's own First Cause—
Forget not thou, when, higher climbed, the sun
Shall paint swart Boggra blue, of afternoons,
And as the primrose pales beneath the furze,
The call shall come from some parishioner
Who drinks the narrowing Dripsey, or who dwells
By west the Mount where mourning cavalcades
Drain the tear-brimming cup and press the hand
With grasp effusive, 'neath th' observant gaze
Foreboding, of your soldiers of the "Cross"—
Those peaceful champions who preserve the name
From dull decay of economic Peel;
Peel, who, when Britain, armed and victualled full,
Rode proudly, payed the final fathoms out
Of that last hawser whereby now we ride,
And eat the sea-borne and precarious bread,
In awe of nations held in scorn before—
Or if from Bridge of Brew, or thereabout,
Occasion summon,—oh! forget not then
The blotting-paper which, in cardboard case,
Herewith I send by book-post, nor the sponge,
Filched from the bath, if need be;—nor forget
The clothes-brush, sacred to the vestibule.
But in capacious pocket, such as he
Must needs be deemed endowed with, when we paint
A bounteous pastor conversant in alms,
Bestow the needful tackle; and when now
Nearing the "street" where loyal Twohigg dwells,
Loyal to him who certifies the perch,
Kept duly metalled, of the County road,
For Midsummer Presentment, turn thy steps
Leftwise, aslant, and up the causewayed slope,
By ridgy headland, and the frequent gate
Destined to grace a stately avenue,

When the next Land Bill shall confer the fee,
Rent-free, of Monataggart, moor and marsh,
On Patrick Cogan, Esquire, and his heirs,—
Tread onward o'er the glebe reclaimed, where once
The spirit-versed familiar of the cell
Drew needful fuel from the friendly bog,
With foot or slane, for use domestic won
Or art alchemic, till thou reach the spot,
Goal of thy journey and my verse alike,
Where lies the pillar latest disinterred,
That bears the precious Ogham number *Four;*
Then tarry not, but clap thy paper to,
Long-fibred, tough, that, copious sponged and oft
And deftly patted, into every chink,
Digit, and flaw, shall stick as close as wax
Pressed by heraldic signet 'neath the hand
Of an Ambassador, accredited
With plenas and potentiary powers
To Court of friendly Monarch, when he seals
Some solemn treaty international,
And fates of Empires harden into form
Of History, the while the bee's-wax cools,
And signatures of high contractors dry.
Dry! Ah! methinks 'tis here I feel the shoe
Of execution pinch the gouty toe
Of fond anticipation nursed in dreams!
Alas! to wait propitious wind and sun
Were tedious-hard, nor reasonably asked
Even of acquaintance bound by service done
To deed reciprocal; and this of thee
Nor interchange, as yet of friendly look
From answering eye to eye, nor service given,
Service but had—emboldens me to crave.
Still, wheresoe'er the old humanities
Of intellectual culture yet survive
The shock of Church Acts and the loathly qualms
Of learned disgust bred by the changing time
That shifts the charge of letters, now to hands

Of Mr Editor, and now to those
Of Mr Auditor or other Jack
Of lecture-platform or the altar-step,
There will petition for scholastic alms
Not fall on ears unheeding; and methinks
The Cogan household, searched, might furnish forth
Some means of transport, and the Rectory fire
Effect the final process. But, behold,
What cares, what fears, attend the arduous aims
Of him who from the cryptic past would raise
Its cipher-woven veil! For haply she,
The Lady of the Mansion, she to whom
Pertains th' intern dominion and the sway
Of realm domestic, without whom nor fire
Can cheerful blaze, nor fireside circle smile,
May make demur; nor have the ugly thing
Profane her hearth-rug. Oh, propitiate her;
Her mollify with words of softening power,
Submissive, sweet, persuasive—these the arms
Victorious ever with the gracious fair—
Till, all impediments at last removed,
As when propitious planets, in their course
With sun and moon concurring, form the house
Desiderated of the Alchemist,
And from the crucible he draws its charge
Refulgent in the light of Rosy Cross,
To serve hereafter as *materies*
For *his* Philosopher's stone, so thou of mine
Shalt from the fender raise the plastic mould,
Dry as Virtuoso's sculptured bone
From prehistoric caverns of Dordogne,
In inner cabinet preserved, and tough
To bear compression of the case, wherein
Snug-packed, I yet shall have it by the post,
Authentic, legible, and all be well!

Much of Ferguson's correspondence with Dr Quarry was carried on in Latin—a language he was accustomed

to use with learned men. He spoke it habitually when abroad, finding himself more fluent in Latin than in German, Italian, or any of the Scandinavian tongues. Being a frequent visitor to libraries and museums, he was able to converse with Continental scholars, and to receive and give information. In French he could make himself intelligible, but had little facility in modern languages.

In a letter to M. Henri Gaidoz, editor of the 'Revue Celtique,' Ferguson tells of his project of forming a collection of casts of Ogham legends. The French philologist had spent some time in Ireland, chiefly for the purpose of acquiring Gaelic—a language important not only for its literature, but, from its affinity to Sanscrit, possessing, like that tongue, a mass of written literature handed down from remote ages, safeguarded in India by the Brahmins, as in Ireland by Brehons and Bards.

The personality of M. Gaidoz was an interesting one. He was much with the Fergusons during his stay in Dublin. Other students from the Continent were, like him, welcome guests: M. le Capitaine Bial, who sketched objects of interest and weapons in the museum of the Royal Irish Academy, and collected material for the Emperor Napoleon III., then engaged on his 'Vie de César'; M. d'Arbois de Jubainville, who has since then utilised the knowledge acquired in Ireland in lectures in the Collége de France, and in publications on the literature of ancient Erin. In addition to these, and other Frenchmen already

spoken of, Ireland was sought by German philologists eager to acquire the Celtic tongue, who came with introductions to Ferguson and were hospitably welcomed by him. One of these, Herr Zimmer, Professor of Sanscrit, told an amusing anecdote of his first experiences in Dublin. Being then ignorant of Irish, he thought it prudent to acquire in advance a few current phrases with which to explain his requirements. On reaching his hotel, he addressed the porter and the manager in what he supposed to be the vernacular, and was surprised to find that they did not speak Gaelic, which he had come to Ireland to learn. To accomplish this, Professor Zimmer had to establish himself for a time in remote districts of the country where Irish is still spoken.

Ferguson's letter to M. Gaidoz was as follows:—

I shall, of course, be one of your subscribers—and a contributor also, if my knowledge enable me to supply anything worth the notice of men of learning.

I have a project to induce the Committee of Polite Literature of the Academy to commence a systematic collection of casts from all the existing Oghams. If we could only rely on the published texts, these "Lapidary Aids" would go a certain length in supplementing the materials of the MS. glosses.

I have been collecting and comparing diligently to this end, and am satisfied that not one in ten of the published Ogham texts is reliable.

An inspection of the Welsh bilinguals or biliterals has satisfied me that the same key applies to them and to the Irish; but I am not sure of the Pictish or Picto-Scottish system.

The following letter to Mr R. R. Brash—a Cork

gentleman, who wrote on the Ogham monuments of his district—shows the honest frankness of Ferguson's character. Unable to accept the conclusions of Mr Brash, Ferguson pointed out what he considered his errors, so that the southern antiquary might himself re-examine and correct them:—

If I had not a literary as well as a personal goodwill towards you, I would not speak so freely; but your late readings cannot fail to shake confidence in your judgment, and by-and-by many of your texts will inevitably be disputed. You have, I believe, fallen into considerable errors at Drumlaghan. . . . Now you are on the spot, and can easily verify these observations. You owe it to yourself, if any of them be well founded, to lose no time in correcting your published texts, and stopping the progress of that worst species of error which results from right reasoning on wrong data. If you really have given the Academy erroneous texts from Drumlaghan, it is better that you should be your own critic. I shall willingly, if you desire, be the medium of your setting yourself right. I have made so many mistakes myself, that I can know how to refrain from censure, and I believe every one who understands the nature of the subject would appreciate the candour of such a course, and think the better of you for it.

Dr Stuart of Edinburgh, author of 'The Sculptured Stones of Scotland,' had been in correspondence with Ferguson about the Aboyne Ogham and the Newton Stone, one of the most obscure and baffling of Ogham texts. In a letter on the former subject Ferguson wrote:—

I have been very much interested in what you were good enough to tell me of the Aboyne Ogham. The progress of Ogham investigation gives every new text an extreme interest. This, which seems the most easily read of all those in Scotland

—for some of your Scottish texts continue to defy our best efforts—is really the most appetising dish to set before an antiquary that can well be imagined. Pray try if you can do anything towards obtaining an authentic cast. I am reasonably sure it contains the well-known Pictish name of Talargan.

In a subsequent letter to Dr Stuart, Ferguson refers to the subject:—

I am gratified to hear of your success in getting a cast of the Aboyne Ogham, and shall not be wanting in a diligent study of any rubbing or duplicate you may be kind enough to send me.

Dr Stuart urged Ferguson to investigate for himself these crucial Scottish inscribed stones:—

I hope to look at the Newton Ogham before closing this.

At present I wish to say that I can secure you every facility for an inspection of both the cast and the original. The proprietor of Newton in Aberdeenshire is an old friend of mine, and I can easily get access to his grounds.

I do hope you will make out this little trip. The monument is undoubtedly a very remarkable one, and, as you say, the key to it has not yet been found. I am therefore desirous that it should come under the notice of those who have real qualifications for elucidating the mystery. . . .

I have just looked at the cast, but can see no continuance of the lines. There *is*, with the light to-day, faint but rather distinct traces of a fifth line in the former group.

I think you must see the stone *itself*. There *is* a sort of edge for the divisions of the Oghams which is best seen there.

I send you an earlier notice of the stone with a photograph.

Dr Stuart must have desired to know the views of the Bishop of Limerick on the Newton inscription, as Ferguson writes on this and other topics the following letter:—

I never heard what the Bishop's idea of the meaning of the Newton inscription might be. He is a man of great prudence, and does not declare himself without well-examined grounds. I daresay the announcement that additional Ogham digits exist below the loop of the line of Oghams has had some influence on his continued reticence.

The feature least acceptable to me in Sullivan's work [Dr W. K. Sullivan, subsequently President of Queen's College, Cork], is the far-travelled linguistic excursion that sometimes carries us to Persia and sometimes to Egypt; but I have little sympathy with a writer in the last 'Athenæum' who takes the same exception after having sought his own illustrations of old Irish society in Africa and New Zealand. Indeed there is nothing that more revolts me in recent dissertations on the Brehon Law than the assumption of scientific supervision on matters which we can only examine near at hand. My friend Mr Richey has written in this vein, inferring, mostly on negative premisses, a state of barbarous dissociation . . . quite inconsistent with the least advances in civilisation. I think it fortunate that Dr Sullivan has approached the subject from its other side. I have not a particle of doubt that where Richey asserts they had no executive officers because he finds no reference to a sheriff in the tracts before him, he acts as unphilosophically as I should do if I made the same statement respecting the English of this century because in Chitty on Contracts or Chambers on Infancy an equal silence on the same subject might be found to exist. Sullivan, on the contrary, looking at the subject with a larger range of material before him, and I think a wider comprehension of its bearings, finds (possibly) a superabundance of ministerial officers, and an organisation oppressively minute of every branch of society. I have as little doubt here that errors exist, and some redundancies will have to be pruned away; for it is the condition of any investigation we can give to the subject that one Irish and one general scholar must work together in every part of the field, and two half-knowledges do not make one whole one. Then, when you consider how jealous the possessors of this rare kind of learning are of one another, it will not surprise you to hear reproaches

of ignorance and bursts of ridicule at one another's slips proceeding from those who ought to be helpers and yoke-fellows—and would be so, if their pretensions were less exclusive. . . .

I think you have a copy of my paper on the rudiments of the Common Law discoverable in the Brehon Code. Sullivan has added considerably to my observations; but if I had time, I would like to take up the subject again, and treat it legally rather than linguistically.

Ferguson had read before the Royal Irish Academy in 1867 the papers on the *Senchus Mor* to which he refers in the last paragraph of his letter to Dr Stuart. Many years later—in 1884—he was made a Brehon Law Commissioner. But at that time he had reached the period of life at which energetic action and laborious mental work are no longer possible. As one of the Commissioners for directing and superintending the transcription and translation of the ancient Laws of Ireland, he wrote to the Lord Chancellor of Ireland approving of the appointment of Dr Robert Atkinson for the work of editor:—

I have read and return the letters of the Bishop of Limerick and Dr Atkinson.

I think Dr Atkinson has taken a just and able view of the situation. I agree in his estimate of the prefaces, and consider that when one man combining the qualifications of lawyer and philologist cannot be had, it is better that the work should be prepared for future utilisation by an independent philologist. I know that a scholar cannot be dealt with as a contractor, and hope that Dr Atkinson's stipulation as to time may occasion no difficulty in accepting his proposal, to which I, for one, am quite prepared to agree.

The correspondence with the Bishop of Limerick about to be given is interesting in more than one aspect. The generous consideration shown both by Ferguson and Dr Graves is worthy of men who are workers for truth alone:—

My dear Ferguson [wrote his Lordship],—You were rightly informed that I had succeeded in deciphering the Ogham inscription on the Camp Stone. . . .

I observed that this inscription, when the Ogham characters have been so set before the eye as to assume their proper alphabetic powers, must be read, not as is usual from left to right, but from right to left. . . .

Your discovery of the Latin legend on the stone is a most important one. To me, certainly, it is more satisfactory than it can be to those who still cherish the old-fashioned theory as to the primeval antiquity of the Ogham, and think to read in our inscriptions something a great deal more interesting than a few proper names. . . .

It may be a little provoking to me to see this first announcement made by others to the Academy of results which have been known to me for years, and which I hold to be of capital importance in this branch of archæological study. But for this I have no one to blame but myself. I should have done more wisely if I had put forth even in the briefest and most fragmentary form the leading results which I had arrived at. But those who know the pleasure of doing things completely, and the pain of turning out imperfect work, will at least make some allowance for me. In any case, it is satisfactory to me to see you concurring in, or at least approximating towards, the general conclusions which I have repeatedly stated in the Academy, and in which I differ from the great majority of those who have written about Oghams. . . .

I adhere to the views which I originally propounded on this subject:—

I. That the Ogham was not a primitive alphabet intended for common use, but an artificial and cryptic one, invented by

persons certainly acquainted with the Latin, and probably with the Runic, alphabet.

II. That the Ogham inscriptions were not *intended* to be easily read and understood, even at the time when they were put upon the monuments. A man's *Ogham name* was not the name he commonly went by, but formed from it according to certain rules and methods.

III. That these rules and methods had regard—(1) to the actual nature of the Ogham character; (2) to the pronunciation of the names; (3) to the partiality of the Ogham writers for Latin and Greek forms. (The final *-os* is not an ancient case-ending, as some have supposed.)

IV. That some, possibly many, Ogham inscriptions will remain undecipherable.

I hope when I go up to Dublin at Easter to be able to give some hours to the examination of your paper moulds and paper casts. The use of them will save the Ogham student much fruitless labour. At the same time, I must check over my own drawings and woodcuts. I think I have all those enumerated in your list, and about eighty more.—Believe me to be, my dear Ferguson, yours very sincerely,

CHARLES LIMERICK.

You have my best thanks for the ample and generous statement contained in your letter of the 5th. After reading it, I felt distressed at having given you the trouble of drawing it up. For I did really confide in the sincerity of your desire to see that my claims as a discoverer in the field of Ogham research were honestly acknowledged.

As regards your generous offer that I should strike my pen through those passages your publication of which would take the wind out of my sails, I do not see how I could avail myself of it.

To use a different metaphor, I could not pull your tissue to pieces for the purpose of reclaiming some threads of my spinning. It is true that I have done and said a good deal to throw light upon the Ogham question, whilst I have printed

only laconic and fragmentary abstracts. The result must be that I shall gain less credit than is due to me.

I cannot help it. Labours of other kinds, fully occupying my time and overtasking my strength, have hitherto rendered it impossible for me to complete and systematise my researches. I still cling to the hope that I may yet achieve what I have undertaken and fulfil what I have promised. My position in the field is this. I found Petrie and Todd sceptical as to the applicability of the commonly received key. All previously attempted readings of Ogham inscriptions were manifestly absurd. I then at Larcom's request tabulated all the inscriptions gathered by the draughtsmen employed on the Ordnance Survey, and by the application of general principles of deciphering I ascertained that the old key was the true one. Proceeding to use it myself, I found that, as a general rule, the inscriptions exhibited a proper name in the patronymic. After that it was not hard to pursue the inquiry and gather indications as to the date of inscriptions, &c.—Believe me to be, my dear Ferguson, ever yours faithfully, CHARLES LIMERICK.

"It gives me the greatest satisfaction to see your handwriting again, and to know that you are resuming your Oghamic pursuits," wrote Ferguson to the Bishop. ". . . It would be a great delight to join you and lend a hand in obtaining casts." Having communicated his own investigations, he wrote a little later:—

MY DEAR BISHOP,—I have heard with great sorrow of your continued indisposition, making it expedient that you should travel abroad. . . . I do most sincerely desire and pray that rest may restore you to us a new man as compared with the present—the old man we so long relied on for instruction, for counsel, and for our poor country's advancement in creditable paths of learning.—Ever, my dear Bishop Graves, your sincerely attached friend and admirer,

SAMUEL FERGUSON.

A considerable number of photographs from Ferguson's casts, with which he designed to illustrate his work on Oghams, left incomplete at his death, have been placed by his widow in the hands of the Bishop of Limerick. It was not in her power to use them when she published 'Ogham Inscriptions in Ireland, Wales, and Scotland' (Edinburgh, David Douglas, 1887), and she felt that it would have been her husband's wish that the labours of his friend—then about to resume his Ogham investigations—should, so far as these went, be lightened. She therefore placed them at the service of the Bishop, and his Lordship came from Limerick to examine them. "I was much touched," he wrote subsequently, "by the proof you gave of your friendly confidence in offering to let me take that precious box to Limerick. I felt as if some one had asked me to take charge of untold gold." He has since published a monograph on the Oghams of Kerry, and is proceeding with those of Cork. It is to be hoped that he may be spared to complete the work, which in the hands of a scholar so accomplished will no doubt be a monumental one.

The names of a few of Ferguson's friends distinguished for their archæological and historic learning may be briefly mentioned: the Rev. Robert King, whose 'Primer of the History of the Holy Catholic Church in Ireland' has been a quarry from which more recent writers have derived much original material; the Rev. Thomas Olden, Rector of Ballyclough, Co. Cork, who has contributed to the 'Dictionary of

National Biography' monographs of Irish ecclesiastics; the Rev. William Reynell, a friend and correspondent of the learned Bishop Reeves; Mr J. R. Garstin, whose bibliography of the Bishop's works has been a valuable addition to his 'Life'; the late Rev. James Graves, editor of the 'Kilkenny Archæological Journal'; Professor G. T. Stokes, D.D., author of 'Ireland and the Celtic Church,' 'Ireland and the Anglo-Norman Church,' and other works; the Rev. Robert Walsh, author of 'Fingal and its Churches.'

On these and on cognate subjects other able works have been given to the world by the late and the present Bishops of Killaloe, Dr Fitzgerald and Dr Wynne; the Very Rev. John Gwynn, formerly Dean of Derry, and now Professor of Divinity in the University of Dublin, whose work "On a Syriac MS. belonging to the Collection of Archbishop Ussher," appeared in the 'Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy' in 1886; the Rev. Dr Bernard, F.T.C.D., who is engaged with Dr Gwynn in completing the labours of the late Bishop Reeves on the 'Book of Armagh,' and whose memoir on "An Uncial MS. of St Cyril of Alexandria" has been contributed to the 'Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy'; the Rev. J. H. MacMahon, whose translation of St Hippolytus's 'Refutation of all Heresies' is a work of rare scholarship; and the late Rev. John S. Gilmore, a man of encyclopedic knowledge, though a shy student, whose attainments were known only to his intimates,—all these men shared in the tastes and pursuits of Ferguson.

Nor has the Church of Rome been wanting in accomplished men of letters. Monsignor Molloy, head of the Catholic University, eminent in science, holds also a high position as a Dante scholar; the late President of Maynooth, the venerable Dr Charles Russell, a man of refined and elegant taste in literature; his kinsman, the Rev. M. Russell, S.J., editor of the 'Irish Monthly Magazine'; the late Rev. John Shearman of Howth, author of 'Loca Patriciana,'—all these were known to Ferguson, and members of his social circle.

In a letter to Dr Angus Smith of Manchester, written in 1873, Ferguson speaks of that gentleman's work on Loch Etive and its associations, and tells of his own Ogham discoveries in Devonshire:—

> Your essays on the objects about Loch Etive possess the great advantage of being the first impressions of a man of knowledge and mature judgment. Veteran antiquaries are too often wedded to the views propounded when they were young men. In what you have written we have judgment and candour in a rare combination. Indeed I am much charmed by the interest you have thrown around a scene which you know has long had a strong hold on my imagination.
>
> Has it ever occurred to you to consider whether vitrification is possible without the application of fire? I would suppose not. Yet it seems strange that there should be so many examples in Scotland, and one only, so far as I know, in Brittany, and one other (which I read of lately) somewhere in Hungary.
>
> When in Devonshire last August I had the good fortune to detect a hitherto unobserved Ogham on the corner of one of the inscribed stones at Tavistock, which supplies the missing-

link necessary for completing the biliteral key to the Welsh and Devonian Oghams. I communicate the fact to our Academy this evening.

Ferguson's interest in matters of archæology was widespread, and by no means confined to Oghams. He delighted to visit historic scenes at home and on the Continent. When in France he explored the supposed site of Alesia, the battlefield where Julius Cæsar finally subdued the Gauls. M. Henri Martin, in his fine drama named after the heroic Vercingetorix, has vividly depicted this hero's last struggle for freedom against the power of Rome. In the following letter to Ferguson Sir Frederic Burton touches on the submission of the gallant Gaulish chief:—

How kind of you to think of sending after me the paper on Mount Callan Sun-Worship. I am particularly glad to have it. I shall now have a respectable volume of your detached papers to bind up.

My memory happened to serve me justly as to the action of Vercingetorix on surrendering himself to the merciless Roman.

I have looked up the passage in Thierry, who might save the trouble of searching Plutarch, as he gives a quotation from the latter in a note. But I chance to have Plutarch's Life of Cæsar in Greek by me [passage quoted in Greek]. But as showing that Thierry viewed the action much in your sense, I must give you the passage in his text. After stating that the Gaul cleared the space between the camps at a gallop, he says: "Soit que la rapidité de sa course l'eût emporté trop loin, soit *qu'il ne fit par là qu'accomplir un cérémonial usité*, il tourna un cercle autour du tribunal, sauta de cheval, et," &c.

But I can't help troubling you further with the passage in Plutarch as it stands in old North's racy English translation, which you told me you have not, although of course it adds nothing in the case: "And Vercingetorix (he that was their

King and Captain in all this war) went out of the gates excellently well armed, and his Horse furnished with a rich Caparison accordingly, and rode round about Cæsar, who sate in his Chair of State. Then lighting from his Horse, he took off his Caparison and furniture, and laid all on the ground, and went and sate down at Cæsar's feet, and said never a word."

Thierry refers also to Florus, lib. iii. c. 10, and to Dio, lib. xl. c. 41; but on looking into both, I find they have nothing touching on your point. But Dio, with his sense of the picturesque, tells of the great stature of the Gaul, and how he looked in his armour.

It seems to me that in whichever sense *religiosus* is to be taken, this circle was made in one of them. Either Vercingetorix meant it as an omen of the hoped-for clemency of Cæsar towards his compatriots, or of his own self-devotion to destruction. It cannot have been accidental, nor can I find that Thierry has any authority for talking of the headlong gallop *towards* the Tribunal, which *may* have led to an overshooting of the goal. But which way Vercingetorix turned his horse still remains a question.

I shall ever look back with pleasure to our day at Tara. Perhaps its wildness was most in harmony with the desolate site of long-past power, with the grey recollections of a people whose sad fortune it has been never to have had the opportunity of developing their own idiosyncrasy and improving it by equal contact and commerce with other nations. But it is a case of the struggle for existence and the survival of the strongest. And if Mommsen be right, the Celtic peoples were doomed by their very nature to merge in those of more political capacity.

Tara may look somewhat (on a smaller scale) like the remains left by the Cimbri of which Tacitus speaks, telling of a once powerful people, then no more. . . .

Tired as I was after the journey and a sleepless night, and stiff with lumbago, I went to the Antiquaries on Thursday evening, and was kept well awake and deeply interested by C. T. Newton's admirable remarks on the Mycenæ find. He spoke without notes, and handled his subject in a masterly

manner. He showed that certain objects found at Ialysus in Rhodes, and which have long been lying shut up in the British Museum, are identical in general style, and in particular cases absolutely identical, with some of the things from Mycenæ. As he had some of Schliemann's photographs present, and some drawings from the Ialysus objects, it was easy to test his assertion. His conclusion was, on well-argued grounds, that both are pre-Homeric, and probably, with the "Treasuries" at Mycenæ, pre-Pelopid. He had a cast from a remarkable gem, found, I think, at Ialysus, on which are two climbing lions at either side of a column, quite similar to those over the famous gate of Mycenæ. Equally striking were the forms of some vases from both localities. Unlike anything hitherto found elsewhere, only in one case a vase resembled precisely some represented as brought in tribute on a monument of Thothmes III. of Egypt, dating, if Egyptologists are right, earlier than 1100 B.C. It is extremely peculiar in the form and the shape and arrangement of the handle and spout. Most curious, too, was the coincidence in the use of the *sepia* as an ornament both on the Mycenæ gold plaques and on the Ialysus vases.

Schliemann, who was present, had little to say, partly perhaps because he is not strong in English, but chiefly that he has no real archæological knowledge. He is an invaluable man as a digger, but he has only one idea, like Gladstone's, that everything can be solved by Homer. . . .

I have been looking in Grimm's wonderful 'German Mythology' for something in old Teutonic customs and superstitions that might throw light upon the passage in Pliny, but in vain.

James Fergusson's book has enormously interested me, though some of his arguments won't stand at all. But he is always a suggestive writer, and his words lay more hold of one than those of many a more cautious and solid reasoner. No doubt more will yet come to light respecting the monuments than has been dreamed of in our philosophy, and the Irish element may play a large part in it.

The friendship between Ferguson and Dr Stokes has

been already dwelt on. It extended, as they grew up, to his sons and daughters, who, by character and gifts, contributed to the attractions of their father's house.

Whitley, called to the Bar in 1855, rose to a high position in India, and ultimately became Law-member of the Viceroy's Council. Although for many years absent from Ireland, he worked zealously at her ancient language and literature. He is a philologist, admittedly, of the highest rank. While in India he published 'The Vision of Adamnán,' 'Cormac's Glossary,' and the 'Félire of Oengus'; and since his return and residence in London, he has edited the 'Tripartite Life of St Patrick,' 'Lives of Saints from the Book of Lismore,' and the 'Martyrology of Gorman.' The second son of Dr Stokes resides in his father's house, 5 Merrion Square. Sir William holds a high position in medicine and surgery, and also as an accomplished speaker and writer, ready, refined, and elegant. Henry—Dr Stokes's youngest son—after an honourable career in the Indian Civil Service, has retired, and is also resident in Dublin. Margaret, the eldest of Dr Stokes's daughters, has made her mark both as artist and author. Her latest works, on the Vestiges of Irish Saints on the Continent, have already been referred to. Her earliest was the illustration of a poem given to her by Ferguson, "The Cromlech on Howth," which she adorned with exquisite illuminated letters from the Book of Kells, one of the finest artistic manuscripts which has come down to us from early Christian times. The Book of Kells is a magnificent specimen of Irish caligraphy.

From its unique designs Miss Stokes took such initial letters as she required, and made her landscape paintings chiefly from scenes at Howth illustrative of Ferguson's poem. "The Cromlech on Howth" was published by Messrs Day in 1861. Since then Miss Stokes's pen and pencil have been diligently employed in her country's service.

An appreciative review of "The Cromlech on Howth," very gratifying to the artist, came to the Fergusons with the following note from Margaret Stokes:—

I send you a notice of the Cromlech which Day sent me word about the other day. Isn't it enchanting! I like it better than any I have seen: I wonder who wrote it? Some one who could *feel* poetry, and who has exactly found out the object of the illustrations.

The review thus spoke of their joint work:—

One of the latest productions of this delightful art [wrote the reviewer] is so beautiful and remarkable that it cannot fail to obtain universal admiration for the selection of the subject for illustration and the perfection of its execution. Among Mr Samuel Ferguson's 'Lays of the Western Gael' there is a poem which excels all the others in the volume by its tenderness and simplicity of sentiment, and the piercing, characteristic, pathetic wildness and solemnity of the music which its rhythm breathes. The effect of this poetry of the ancient days of Ireland is to be felt, not to be described. It is almost physical; it seems to thrill the heart and pass through the nerves; it is keenly, almost painfully delightful, like the inhalation of air of extraordinary purity. All those readers who are familiar with this poetry, and have enjoyed to the full the peculiar and unparalleled pleasure it confers, will rejoice to find "The Cromlech on Howth" in this picturesque and appropriate guise; while those to whom it is

unknown will make their first acquaintance with it when invested with the splendid apparel of illumination, thus enriching and concentrating by illustration and association of time and custom the beautiful ancient legend which it enshrines.

The illuminations of this beautiful volume, which consist of the initial letters, are taken from the Books of Kells and of Durrow. Their antiquity lends them an interest which their beauty, their grace, the fertile, fervent fancy which they indicate, the correctness of their lines, and the richness and delicacy of their colouring, increases to admiration and delight. In this volume everything is satisfactory, the material is amply deserving of the embellishment bestowed upon it, and nothing is wanting to the perfection of the decoration.

In a letter to Ferguson, Sir Frederic Burton speaks with enthusiasm of "The Cromlech on Howth," and the beautiful illustrations by Margaret Stokes, their common friend:—

I have just treated myself to the splendid edition of the "Cromlech on Howth," which when you were here I did not know had yet appeared. It is not only a most beautiful work, but a highly valuable one, and prepared with the greatest taste, skill, and feeling. The feeling of the drawings is unusually well reproduced. The initial letters are exquisite, and form in themselves quite a manual of Scoto-Celtic ornamentation. They are indeed most valuable, especially as their correctness and conscientiousness are no doubt beyond challenge. The letterpress is also very useful, and gives in a short space such information as would have to be painfully sought through many works. As to the cover, it is the best I know of, and quite transcends anything of the kind done in English works.

I have not said enough about the landscapes, but the truth, and poetic feeling, and skill of those especially at pages 1, 3, 5, and 7 (the landscapes themselves are misnumbered in my copy), are beyond praise.

I rejoice to see this work, and could only wish it had a wider circulation than it is likely to have at this side of the Channel.

But it is something done towards reinstating the history of our country, and forcing those out of it—many perhaps within it—to acknowledge that, spite of the war waged against all that was indigenous for so many centuries, there still remain irrefragable proofs of a former state of culture amongst a race only prevented, I firmly believe, from having taken an equal stand amongst the European nations by the misfortune of geographical position.

Ferguson kept up an active correspondence with the son of his old friend while Whitley Stokes was in India. It was chiefly concerned with philology as applied to Ogham interpretation. How highly he estimated the genius and character of Whitley is expressed in a letter, written at a later period, to Mr Connolly, a New York publisher, who had sought permission to include some of Ferguson's poems in a contemplated volume, and had asked for information about Whitley Stokes:—

Dr Whitley Stokes, about whom you inquire, is a man quite illustrious in the world of learning. He is one of the leading authorities in Celtic and old Irish philology in all the universities of Europe. He is son of the late Dr William Stokes, one of my predecessors in the Presidency of the Academy, who was himself son of the elder and less eminent Whitley you refer to. The present gentleman resides in London, having retired from his office of Law-member of the Council of the Viceroy of India. He is author of many works in the field of old Irish learning, which are of the utmost value to this country, but of the existence of which the noisy Irish know nothing.

I have done what I could to help men like him in laying the foundations of what I hope may yet be a national Irish literature. With this view I have published my works here at the cost of being, for the present at least, equally unknown

here and in England. The chief poem I have published, "Congal," does not appear to be known to you.

I was on the slopes of the Himálaya [wrote Whitley Stokes] when your Oghamic letter of the 16th August 1865 reached me. . . . I confess my incredulity about the accuracy of most of the transcriptions and transliterations of Ogham inscriptions. Either the appropriate key (I am convinced there are several keys) has not been applied, or the lines have not been copied with perfect fidelity — or else those lines have been confounded with the natural markings of the stone. Your Buckland Monachorum and Penrhos Llugwy inscriptions were quite new to me and most interesting: the form *maccu* (in Dubthach *maccu*-lugir, &c.) has long been familiar to me in Irish MSS. Have we here traces of that Gaelic occupation of the western side of Britain of which Cormac speaks in the story of Mug-éime? *Decceda*, *Decedda*, are clearly (I think) genitives singular of a name, the nom. sg. of which in Old-Celtic would have been something like *Decetis*. Compare the fem. *iâ*-stem *Decetia*, which occurs somewhere in Cæsar, and is cited by Zeuss, 'Gramm. Celtica,' ii. 758. . . .

I haven't the smallest confidence in all this. It is sheer guess-work. But a guess may perhaps put persons other than the guesser on the right track. I cannot agree with you in thinking the inscription has a Greek look. It is an Old-Celtic bilingual like the one at St Dogmaels: "Sagra|m|ni fili cunatami," and then in Ogham, "Sagramni maqi cunatami." I wish you would send me a rubbing of it. . . .

H. Summer Maine was greatly delighted with your "Cean Dubh Deelish," which I showed him the other night when he was dining with us. This and the "Burial of King Cormac" are my favourites among the new poems in your book.

I send by book-post a paper which you will read with interest [wrote Ferguson, with a copy of his paper on the Brehon Laws]. If but half of my conclusions are well founded, it is not a law of strangers under which we live, but the old Western European code, in which the Irish have as

good an inheritance as the Anglo-Saxons. You will not think my emendation of *rob* presumptuous. I begin to think that for purposes of study it is as well that the Brehon publication has been put forward as it is. If the whole of the collection were printed as O'Donovan left it, without note or comment, a well-instructed lawyer and civilian would reconcile discrepancies and marshal the analogies with better chance of success than by going at the material in manuscript. By the time you come over on your leave I hope to have my work pretty well forward, and that you and I and some others may be able to keep the Academy out of a position of declining reputation. I fear the rivalry of the theologies is likely to blight the growth of learning even in that retreat; but we are about to have another University, and possibly it may come to be a fair rivalry of ability. I shall also have some new ballad poems to show you: one on Mesgedra, the supplier of the brain-ball; but I have kept clear of the horrible, I think successfully.

It is probable that the October Quarterly will contain a notice by me of our dear friend Todd's 'Wars of the Gael,' and Hennessy's 'Chronicon Scotorum.' I have written some notices for the 'Athenæum' from time to time on Dr Hill's Newton Stone inscription (which I think I shall be able to read), Forbes Leslie's work about Early Races of Scotland, Arnold's Celtic Literature, and Sir J. Simpson's Inscribed Stones. I am rather disappointed in this last work. After so long an induction, I thought him ripe for some suggestion of an inference. For my own part, I incline to believe in an early race of mankind whose *débris* are in the out-parts of the earth, and whose original nidus may just as probably have been in high Europe as in high Asia.

Adieu, dear Whitley. You are now two friends in one. I hope to make your lady's personal acquaintance, and friendship too, some of these days. Offer her my own and my wife's best wishes, and believe me always your faithful old friend,

SAML. FERGUSON.

On hearing of Ferguson's appointment to the Record Office, Whitley Stokes wrote from Simla:—

I felt very great pleasure at the news of your appointment, although it involves, I suppose, your retirement from practice at the Bar. Had you been practising in England, I confess I should have regretted the step. But in Ireland no one holding aloof, as you have done, from the ignoble strife of parties, appears to have a chance of promotion to the Bench. I shall read your paper on the Brehon Laws with much interest, provided it ever reaches me: as yet, however, it has not done so. Pray send me another copy addressed "Legislative Council House, Calcutta." If both arrive, I shall hand over one to H. S. Maine, by whom it will be fully appreciated. The articles in the 'Quarterly Review' also I shall read with eagerness. I have received not only the 'Wars of the Gael,' but Hennessy's 'Chronicle.' Both books are nearly worthless from the purely philological point of view, owing to the editors having failed to indicate the places where they have extended the numerous contractions of the original MSS. The so-called Irish type (beautiful as it is, regarded æsthetically) is unfit for employment in critical editions, as it possesses nothing analogous to the italics which are always now employed to represent such extensions. This would perhaps be of less importance had the editors in the present instance as scholarly an acquaintance with Irish as O'Donovan possessed. . . .

There is one man, and, so far as I know, only one, capable of becoming O'Donovan's successor, and that is Standish H. O'Grady. Nothing would give me such pleasure and hope for the future of Celtic letters as hearing that you had succeeded in getting him to accept a situation in your office.

In Todd's book there are some fine things which you will doubtless bring forward. The 'Chron. Scot.,' however, is dreary reading. These Irish Annals have the same relation to history that tally-sticks or tavern-scores have to one of Gladstone's financial statements. I should willingly see them left in MS. until the Dinn-senchas and the romances in the 'Leabhar na h'Uidhre,' the 'Book of Leinster,' the 'Leabhar Buidhe Lecain,' &c., had been given to the world. There, and in the Laws, and the Saints' lives, is Irish history to be found.

There, and not in these arid Annals, is what scholars want to know about the Irish Celts — namely, their modes of life, thought, and feeling, their superstitions, legends, and poetry. The characters may be fabulous, but the manners and morals attributed to them by the medieval romancist are necessarily those, or nearly those, of his contemporaries. Otherwise his work would have been unintelligible and uninteresting to his ignorant audience. But to return to the 'Chron. Scot.' The two quatrains at p. 92 are good. So, too, are those at p. 76, which I turned thus as I lay awake the other night :—

"The huge cold heavy-toppling swell,
The blinding sun,
Saw Conaing in his wicker coracle
And bore him down.
The sea that o'er him flung her wet, white hair,
Avenging me,
Now lies in light and murmurs music there
By Tortan's Tree."

That notion of the sea and her white hair (*fairge* is feminine) re-occurs in one of the old quatrains which Zeuss printed from a St Gall code, and which (do you remember?) was thus parodied at Aran :—

"Bitter in sooth is the wind to-night,
Rousing the wrath of the white-haired sea;
But smooth-sea swimming is no delight
To Chancery barristers bold and free!"

That was a happy time! But I am very happy, and never regret that I have come to India. My dear wife was much gratified by your reference to her. Remember me affectionately to Mrs Ferguson, and believe me always yours,

WHITLEY STOKES.

During the absence of his eldest son in India, Dr Stokes became President of the Royal Irish Academy. In his statement to the Council, he observed of Ferguson's work in its Museum :—

There is no one present who feels more strongly than I do the energy and skill which have been displayed by Mr Ferguson in the arrangements of our Museum, and the boon he has conferred upon the Academy by the formation of a great lapidary museum. It is indeed quite marvellous that so much could have been made of the small amount of space at his disposal. But we have the future to consider. We may hope not only that many private collections may yet be added to the Museum, but that future excavations may cause the soil of Ireland to yield up more and more of the priceless treasures of ancient art she has proved herself so rich in.

The Academy was at this time employing its scribes in making facsimile copies of Irish MSS. Whitley Stokes criticised with severity some flaws in the transcription. To this Ferguson alludes in the following letter:—

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, DUBLIN,
18th May 1875.

MY DEAR WHITLEY,—Your additions have opened my mind to much new observation, and I begin to perceive something of the connections and reasons of your science. . . . I think you do the scribe wrong, and mete out an unequal measure of your censure in his regard. . . . If this be the worst that can be said of his work, you will feel a constant prick of conscience until you set yourself right with yourself by making him some amends. We cannot be perfect. We are human. Help us by gentle correction, and, above all, by instruction, which, the more we know, the more willing we will be to receive from you, whom we all recognise as our master.

Your affectionate friend (I wish I could call myself *discipulus*),

SAML. FERGUSON.

I think, if my replication is taken in a good spirit [wrote Whitley Stokes], the present controversy will be beneficial. But I value your friendship more than all the philology in the world; and if anything I have written or shall write should alienate you from me, I should never cease to regret it. . . .

I have been much absorbed in my revised and annotated edition of our legislative Acts, which will extend to over 2200 pages, and in drawing Bills about Opium, Reformatory Schools, and the Tariff, the Burmese Courts, Emigration, &c., &c. I have also tried to codify our Equity law about specific performance and injunctions, and my draft will, I trust, become law next year. The only great pleasures we have had are the news of my father's having received the German order *pour le mérite*, and the arrival from Cashmere of a codex of the 'Atharva-Veda,' written on sheets of birch-bark, about 500 years old, which, when deciphered (it is in that accursed Shardah character), is pretty sure to yield important results not only for Sanskrit philology, but for the history of the lower forms of religion. The edition of that Veda by Roth and Whitney will have to be quite recast.

Your "Ḍeath of Cuchulain"[1] [wrote Ferguson to Whitley Stokes] has features of surprising grandeur and rude pathetic feeling. It is the peculiarity of these Irish heroics that in the midst of offensive exaggerations and puerilities of incident they tower into a general majesty, of inestimable value to the poet who may be able to turn them to the uses of modern thought. Your version has its usual clearness and force. You set the example of an elegant use of the homely and direct forms of our language. What a contrast to the tawdry attempts at fine writing that these originals have sometimes evoked! . . . Many a time and oft I have travelled on the top of the Belfast mail, little thinking of the heroic chariot-tracks in which our wheels ran and jolted. The whole Táin topography of that district ought to be recoverable. Modern Irish tales are generally very poor, but these old romances are as full of matter as the fables of Hyginus. In the "death" I fancy there is some religious—I don't speak theologically—significance in the device of the quarrellers at the four corners of the surrounding hosts of Cu's enemies. He was under *geis* not to refuse certain requests—not to do certain things. This was his *taboo:* your translation "he was bound" hardly comes up to the strength of his being under these unholy bonds. While I say this, I fail to find any form of words that will do

[1] See 'Revue Celtique,' t. iii. p. 175.

better and be a translation. On the whole, the original literature of Western Europe has received no greater accession of tragic material for a long time than that scene where Lugad puts aside the hair of the dead hero. Almost as striking is the death of Lugad himself, and the war-casuistry of Conall. These are grand forms to fill the eye of a mind conversant with the pettinesses of the magazines and newspapers.

I dread the mischief that may be done by poor translations. I daresay what is forthcoming will be in the language of Curry. He had, and O'Looney had too, a respectable directness of apposite language; but none of them knew, or knows, the delicate turns that make all the difference between the jejune and the racy. However, you show us what the language can do, and will continue,—

> "And, by your overflow,
> Raise us from what is low."

. . When shall I see you again? that is — subject to the implied contingency. I see old friends falling and failing around me, and must be content to go my ways leaving undone a great deal that I ought to have done; but I have lived, and loved, and done something if not all I might, and will bequeath, in all likelihood to you, or possibly to one or two others, the duty and I hope the reward of making the voice of this despised people of ours heard high up Olympus.

I have hardly left space to say my wife always speaks with affection of you and of Mrs Stokes and your little ones. Were she by me she would send her love. Take and distribute mine as amply as you please all round your fireside.—Ever, dear Whitley, your affectionate friend, SAML. FERGUSON.

Dr Stokes had in 1873 proposed to make a tour in Brittany, accompanied by his daughter Margaret. He needed change of scene after the sad loss of his wife in that year. Ferguson gave him a letter of introduction to the late Vicomte de la Villemarqué, assuring Stokes of a welcome should he find himself in the vicinity of the Château of Keransker.

My dear Friend [he wrote to the Vicomte],—This note will be presented by Dr William Stokes, the friend and promoter of everything we can speak of with any pride that has been achieved in this poor country during the last half-century. It will afford you sincere delight to see the father of Whitley Stokes and the companion of Todd, Petrie, O'Donovan, and Curry.

Dr Stokes will be accompanied by his daughter Margaret, a lady of accomplishments as rare and admirable in their kind as are those of her illustrious brother.

I write at the house of my friend, which is at present a house of mourning. He proposes to travel for some time in your country, where, I have assured him, if he pass near Keransker, he will but have to make his presence known to you to assure himself of a sympathetic and kindly welcome.

I continue to reside at my old address, where a gracious Providence still spares me my dear companion, your old friend, from whom I present affectionate remembrances.—Ever, dear Vicomte, very faithfully yours,

Samuel Ferguson.

Dr Stokes never fully recovered the loss of his wife, though he survived her for a few years, and interested himself in his duties as President of the Royal Irish Academy. He died on the 7th of January 1878. Not long before, Ferguson wrote to the faithful daughter and devoted nurse of the friend he prized and was about to lose, a few words of comfort and encouragement:—

7th Dec. '77.

My dear Margaret,—The lethargy you describe is perhaps a happier dispensation than full consciousness. Your father is not a man who requires light at the last. His mind has had the illumination of wisdom and goodness during years and years of preparation for another life, by the dis-

charge of every duty and the diffusion of every virtue in this. . . .

Go on, good daughter, good friend, and believe me very affectionately yours, SAMUEL FERGUSON.

When Ferguson was made a Knight in 1878 his friend in India wrote to congratulate him:—

SIMLA, *9th May* '78.

MY DEAR SIR SAMUEL,—My wife and I were much delighted to hear from Margaret and to see in the 'Pall Mall Budget' that you had been knighted. So was a Mrs Hewitt, an old friend of yours, who called here the other day. It must have given Lady Ferguson much pleasure, and the Conservative Government in honouring you has added one more claim to respect and support. Now I have two Sir Samuels to bear in memory with veneration and affection—the other, of course, was Romilly.

I felt very deeply your kindness to Margaret after my dear father's death. . . .

Why do you not bring out the photographs of your paper casts? Till we get these we shall have no sure foothold for applying the philological test—the only one that can yield any certain result. . . . With affectionate remembrances to Lady Ferguson, I am always most faithfully yours,

WHITLEY STOKES.

The two following letters, written in 1882, to Margaret Stokes, evince the warm affection Ferguson felt for her and all the Stokes family. Her brother Whitley, at this time returned from India, had settled in London; but there, as elsewhere, had occupied himself in editing early Irish literature:—

14th February 1882.

MY DEAR MARGARET,—I read at the Academy last night a curious paper, of which I send you the abstract. It brings

Byzantine and Irish history into an interesting and, I fancy, novel contact. I also enclose a photograph, which I have managed to sit for without much severity of aspect, though painfully requested to "look pleasant," which, I suppose, is the customary ordeal in all such studios. My youthful looks occasion me some surprise, considering that I stand on the verge of my seventy-second birthday, and enjoy the privilege of never being quite well. My dear Molly, I rejoice to tell you, has no such claim on the sympathy of her friends. She is full of affairs, domestic, social, collegiate (Alexandrine), and industrial. For my own part, if I live two or three years longer, I have speculations enough to occupy my leisure time very agreeably; and when it comes to my turn, will look back with a grateful mind on many pleasures afforded me during life by the friendship of the truly good people I have known —you, my dear Margaret, and those who have been and are near and dear to you, being counted amongst the first. I shall also send you something else by book-post.—Affectionately yours, SAMUEL FERGUSON.

March 2, 1882.

MY DEAR MARGARET,—As you will see Whitley sooner than I, and I do not know where else to address him, will you say for me that I have got the 'Togail Troi,' and am highly delighted with and instructed by it. If Mr Tennyson wishes to see how old Irish bardic genius dealt with classical material, he could not have a better instance than in the description of the Greek fleet approaching Sigeum. It is exaggeration, not bombast—the exaggeration of highly exalted fancy and power. So much pleased am I that I shall now take my copy of the 'Togail Troi,' which at first I hesitated to do owing to the impression that the 'Togail' was, as said in the preface [to the facsimile of the 'Book of Leinster'], "simply a translation from the Latin."

Ferguson, who had been an Honorary Member of the Society of Scottish Antiquaries since 1874, delivered in Edinburgh, on their invitation, in the

autumn of 1884, what are known as the Rhind Lectures, his subject being Ogham Inscriptions in Great Britain and Ireland. In the spring of that year he had spent some time in Edinburgh on the occasion of the Tercentenary celebration of her University. He had then the privilege of being one of those on whom the degree of LL.D. was conferred *honoris causâ*. The Tercentenary was a delightful gathering. The city was *en fête;* its citizens hospitable in the extreme; the weather splendid. Men from all parts of the world, illustrious in achievement, who had extended in divers directions the boundaries of knowledge, were there assembled. Two Frenchmen—strong contrasts—were greeted with marked enthusiasm: Pasteur, quiet in dress and demeanour, almost insignificant in person; and Count Ferdinand de Lesseps, of commanding height, brilliant appearance and garb, covered with decorations, with head erect and flashing eyes, moved proudly amid the plaudits of the assembly, which still more vociferously cheered his unassuming countryman.

Our Edinburgh experiences have been very agreeable [wrote Sir Samuel to Mr Justice O'Hagan on the 3d of May 1884]. I purpose, *D.V.*, to return in October, when the Society of Scottish Antiquaries have asked me to deliver their Rhind Lectures. It is late in life for me to take up such an engagement, but I begin to be very sensible of the value of the time that is left me, and hope to put Irish inscriptional knowledge on a more acceptable footing in what I shall have to say.

On hearing that Ogham inscriptions were to be

the subject, Dr Reeves, then Dean of Armagh, sent his congratulations to Ferguson, and spoke of the "Rhinder-post" as "one of great honour, which in your occupation will acquire much *éclat*."

You have it now in your power [Reeves continued] to set the Ogham question *ex cathedra* on its just footing. Ogham orthodoxy is in the keeping of yourself and the Bishop of Limerick. I believe ye are of one mind, and most cordial co-operators. Crush out the lingering nonsense of the Vallanceyites, and though you may not be able to solve every enigma and clear away every obscurity, yet let the result of your pronouncements be—the acquiescence of the doubtful and the unanimous approval of the learned.

Ferguson's visits to Edinburgh in 1884 were not only occasions of unmixed pleasure, but enabled him to renew old friendships and to make new friends. On his return to Dublin he received from Dr, now Sir Arthur Mitchell, K.C.B., the following letter:—

34 Drummond Place,
Edinburgh, 9*th November* 1884.

My dear Sir Samuel,—The enclosed from Professor Blackie carries a message to you. Read and rive.

I hope you are none the worse of your labours here. We are all greatly the better of your coming among us. This world is now as full of praise of you as the Dublin world has long been.

Give my kindest regards to Lady Ferguson. I hope some day to accept her kind invitation—some day not very distant, but not so close at hand as I could wish it to be. I should go to the bottom, if I tried to cross the sea with such a load of work on my back as I have at present. A little while ago I wanted to go to Ireland to see Ireland; now I want to go to it to see Lady Ferguson and you again. Remember me also to your charming nieces.

I also enclose a note I had from Mr Skene explaining his absence from your last lecture. Mrs Mitchell is not beside me while I write; if she were, I should have to fill another sheet with kind messages from her.—Ever sincerely yours,

ARTHUR MITCHELL.

Sir Arthur Mitchell, who has but recently retired from his laborious duties as Commissioner of Lunacy in Scotland, had himself been a Rhind Lecturer. 'The Past in the Present' preserves for a wider audience his valuable and interesting addresses. Sir Arthur is a member of the Universities Commission of Scotland.

It was Ferguson's intention to publish his Rhind Lectures with additional matter and illustrative photographs, but he deferred going to press till he could make his book a complete record of all that was known of Ogham legends. With this end in view he sent the Lectures to Dr Whitley Stokes for philological criticism, and devoted his next vacation to a tour in Scandinavia. In Bergen, Christiania, Stockholm, Upsala, and Copenhagen he diligently studied in the museums, and conversed with their curators. He was much impressed with the rich accumulations of objects of antiquarian interest at Stockholm, and the ability of Herr Hildebrand, at the head of that national institution.

The following letters to Dr Whitley Stokes will show how Sir Samuel's ever-active mind was at work during the spring and summer of 1885:—

DUBLIN, *March* 31, 1885.

MY DEAR WHITLEY,—I have been unable to put a hand to the Lectures since I last read your notes. . . .

I had given a good deal of consideration to the Patrician

documents, and was able to bring some new matter to bear on the questions of birthplace, foreign travel, and epoch. My mind inclines to the pre-Palladian period, to British birth and orders, and home education, for the author of the 'Confessio.' I put the 'Confessio' itself in blank verse as the only form of rendering that unites literalness with fervour and effusion. I send you a proof, which pray consider confidential, and return when you have read it. You will see I make the second captivity a spiritual one, and in some other passages correct, I think, previous translations.

In the same parcel I return the proofs of the Lectures which you were kind enough to note for me. If they aid at all in any of your researches, I shall be very glad to have promoted inquiries, I am sure, far more valuable than my own.

21st August 1885.

My dear Whitley,—I stand amazed at the evidences of thought, observation, and industry which I find here to-day on my return from my vacation, in your several gifts to me; for which I need not express my own, but wish I could adequately express our country's thanks. Little do these ignorant, turbulent, discontented poor Irish know the labour and the learning that have been devoted to the building up for them of a School of Letters; but in time they will know, and some day or other they will venerate the name of Stokes. I am myself, I fear, too old to learn all your labours might teach me; but I am capable of seeing the vast utility to the student of old Irish of your tract on the declensions, and can see also that many rash speculations may be averted and true indications confirmed by your correction of the text of the glosses. What you mention in your card is new to me as regards the equivalence of the counter-apposited digits in Ogham to the vowels: I only knew it as applying to consonants.

We had a very agreeable time in Norway and at Stockholm and Copenhagen. Poor Worsaae must have died very suddenly. I had called at his house and learned that he was in the country on the day of my arrival, and during my week's visit heard nothing of his illness, but learned his death on my

arrival at Hull. We had one of our nieces with us, a fine young girl, whose enjoyment of the *carrioles* and *cafés* equalled my own pleasure in the museums. I saw nothing Oghamic, but a good many things in symbolical sculpture and metal-work, throwing light, I think, on the incised figures on the Pictish stones. I go to work, *D.V.*, to-morrow on my proofs, helped to the avoidance of error by your kind assistance.

The illness which attacked him early in 1886—failure of the heart's action—arrested Sir Samuel's purpose. It was touching to see him on his sick-bed propped up on pillows, examining his casts and pondering over their mysterious markings, and then, realising that he must relinquish the endeavour to complete his work, desirous that others should take it up. "If Alick Macalister when he grows up," said Sir Samuel to his wife, "shows the same tastes which distinguished him as a boy, I should like him to have my casts." This young son of Professor Macalister, now of Cambridge, when little more than a child was ever ready to follow his elder friend in Oghamic studies, and Lady Ferguson has since carried out the wish expressed by her husband.

Upwards of one hundred and sixty of these casts had been photographed under his supervision—designed, when the series was complete, to illustrate his work on Ogham Inscriptions. When this was posthumously published in 1887, the texts, unaccompanied by illustrations, alone were given. The book was reviewed in the 'Archæological Journal,' vol. 44, London, 1887. It was pronounced "certain to become a permanent and classic authority on the subject with which it deals.

. . . As the texts amount to 226—all that are known—our readers can judge the value of the exhaustive method with which Sir Samuel has treated his subject, and it will be long ere this volume is superseded as the classic on Ogham."

My dear Lady Ferguson [wrote Dr Whitley Stokes in January 1886],—I have this moment heard for the first time of Sir Samuel's serious illness. Pray do not show him (at all events till he recovers) the letter from me which Maddie says she has forwarded to you. It would only worry him. And when you have a spare minute, pray send me a post-card saying how he is. He and Dean Reeves and Burton are the only old Irish friends who are now left to me, and of these Sir Samuel is the dearest.—Ever yours,

Whitley Stokes.

In February 1886 Ferguson wrote a post-card to his friend:—

Thanks for kind letter to my wife. I am sitting up, and promised liberty out of doors in a week. . . . I hope "to see the bud upo' the timmer" of another spring. Farewell.

S. F.

Sir William Stokes, in his devoted and skilful attentions to his father's and his own lifelong friend, did all that medical science can do to prolong life and lighten pain. His sister offered the hospitality of her charming home at Howth. To her kind proposal Ferguson replied:—

I have little prospect, dear Maddie, of profiting by your hospitable goodness. There is my Report for 1885 to put together the minute I can apply myself to work, and that I must do at the Record Office. William hopes to let me out next week: I shall drive down and back again easily, but a

daily train and drive would be too much. Wait till the whins are in blossom and cares of duty relaxed.—Your affectionate friend, SAMUEL FERGUSON.

Faithfulness to friendship, devotion to the land he loved, characterised Ferguson to the last. Both are evidenced in the following words addressed to Dr Whitley Stokes:—

There is on my mind a profound conviction that men like you are the destined redeemers of this country, and I would, if it were possible, contribute some honest days' work in your company, to that end, before I quit the scene.

CHAPTER XIX.

1864–1886.

FRIENDSHIPS (*continued*)—A TOUR IN DONEGAL.

"For life, with all it yields of joy and woe,
And hope and fear,—believe the aged friend,—
Is just our chance o' the prize of learning love,
How love might be, hath been indeed, and is;
And that we hold thenceforth to the uttermost
Such prize despite the envy of the world,
And, having gained truth, keep truth: that is all."

—ROBERT BROWNING.

THE Rev. James Henthorn Todd, D.D., Senior Fellow of Trinity College, Dublin, and Regius Professor of Hebrew in its University, was closely associated with Reeves, Stokes, Petrie, and Ferguson in friendship, as in the pursuits of learning. Todd was grave and erudite, yet with a keen relish for humour—an elderly bachelor, living chiefly in his rooms in college. But at his home at Silveracre, Rathfarnham, he was surrounded by a large circle of relatives and friends. His father had died while he was yet a youth, leaving a large family but slenderly provided for. This, the eldest son, made his way in college by ability and

labour—made a home for his widowed mother, educated and put forward in life his younger brothers and sisters, finding his own happiness in their wellbeing. Dr Todd was a zealous worker for his country and his Church. He was a High Churchman of the olden type, in no sense a ritualist, but every inch a priest. Among his learned labours for Ireland may be named his 'Life of Saint Patrick, Apostle of Ireland'; also his 'War of the Gaedhil with the Gaill; or, The Invasions of Ireland by the Danes and other Norsemen,' 1867.

This volume, which contains the Irish text with an English translation, he enriched with notes and illustrations, many of them from Scandinavian sources; for the battle of Clontarf, A.D. 1014, in which the forces of Brian Boru defeated the Danes—the victory with which this chronicle of Brian closes—has also been narrated in the Sagas, notably in "Burnt Nial." The Irish chronicle has been ascribed to MacLiag, the Bard of Brian. It bears internal evidence of being the work of one present at the battle of Clontarf, and, for vivid and picturesque narrative by an eyewitness, is of great interest. Ferguson reviewed the work, in an article entitled "Lord Romilly's Irish Publications," in the pages of the 'Quarterly Review,' 1867. The article opens with an account of the "Annals" and of the "Historic Tales" which are found in Irish manuscripts. To the latter class belongs the "Táin-bó-Cuailgne," of which the reviewer thus speaks:—

> The earliest, and, on the whole, the grandest, remains unpublished. It celebrates in an heroic, epic, though inflated

manner, an invasion of Ulster by the warriors of Connaught in the pre-Christian times, and is called the "Táin-bó Cuailgne," or Cattle Spoil of Quelgny. The last also remains unpublished. It is called by a formidable-looking Irish name signifying the "Wars of Turlogh," and relates the conflicts and fortunes of the great native families of Clare from the twelfth to the middle of the fifteenth century. . . . Several of the intermediate ones have, through the exertions mainly of Dr Todd, been published by the Irish Archæological and Celtic Societies.

The MS. edited by Dr Todd and reviewed by Ferguson deals with the invasion of Ireland by the Norsemen :—

It appears that an ecclesiastic of Kildare, when the too famous Dermot MacMurrogh was a boy, had compiled for that young prince's use a kind of cyclopædia or repertory of native pieces of literature, the greater portion of which is still in existence in the library of Trinity College, Dublin, and is known as the 'Book of Leinster.' Among other tracts for the entertainment and instruction of young Dermot this collection comprised a copy of the 'Wars of the Gaels and Gauls.' Here it is to be understood that, as some of the Continental nations give the name of Welsh to all foreigners, so the Gael of Ireland used to designate externs as Gauls; and in this particular instance the word signifies Norse and Danish foreigners, the work being in effect a poetico-historic narrative of the progress of the Norse invasions of Ireland from their commencement in the beginning of the ninth century down to their termination with the battle of Clontarf in the beginning of the eleventh. The battle of Clontarf is indeed the one great event which it celebrates, all the other matter being introductory and leading up to that culminating-point of the story. . . .

Most educated persons are aware of the fact that on Good Friday, A.D. 1014, the united forces of Leinster and the Danes of Dublin, with their foreign auxiliaries, sustained a decisive

defeat from the native forces under Brian, and that the aged king lost his own life on that occasion. . . . We refer those of our readers who may care to know the detail of the organisation and array of the armies on either side, to Dr Todd's elaborate Introduction, in which he has extracted its historical substance from the bardic text, and collated it with whatever illustrative or explanatory matter his great learning has enabled him to draw from the literature of these islands or of Scandinavia. Some noticeable facts, however, are brought out with great vividness in the bardic text. It seems certain that this was one of the hardest fought battles ever joined. It lasted from high water in the morning till high water in the evening, and was fought out in one field by men on foot, and almost wholly in hand-to-hand combat. Many of the Danes wore plate and chain armour. The Irish, as was their custom, had no defensive arms save helmets; but their patricians and those who matched themselves against the men in mail carried Danish battle-axes, in addition to their heavy swords, for the purpose of breaking the iron and brass casings of their adversaries. There seems to have been little use of the spear, and neither chariots nor cavalry are mentioned. It appears to have been mainly a work of handy blows, kept up without cessation or flinching for a surprising length of time. . . .

The "Njal-Saga" has enabled Dr Todd to give us the personal description of some of the Danish leaders. Of these the most famous is Brodar, by whose hand Brian fell towards the close of the battle. . . . The Saga is as characteristic of the early Norse genius as the bardic tale is of the Gaelic. From it Gray derived his noble ode of the "Fatal Sisters." And if we compare the rude and savage original with his polished and strong stanzas, we shall see what are the legitimate uses to which some Irish Gray may hereafter convert the crude yet less barbarous material supplied by the Irish chronicler.

Of Dr Todd's treatment of his subject Ferguson thus speaks:—

Whatever a patient and laborious scholar could do to settle the text, to separate the fabulous parts from the historic, to marshal the events in right chronological sequence, to fix localities, and to show the genealogies and family connections of the principal characters, he has done with the most praiseworthy pains. In the Danish pedigrees in particular he displays a singular amount of learned research, and shows a state of family connection between the invaders and the great native houses which will be new to the best instructed scholars in these obscure provinces of British history. The book is altogether a singular instance of solid learning, devoting itself to the service of a semi-barbarous bardism which half a century ago would have been passed by as unworthy of a scholar's notice. But such, no doubt, appeared the first commentaries on the 'Nibelungenlied,' when Germany stood in relation to Teutonic literature as Ireland now does to that of her Gael. . . .

If Ireland is to reap any real intellectual benefit from the vast work of antiquarian learning accumulated during the last thirty years, comprising above fifty published volumes of substantial matter, not to speak of the collections of manuscripts acquired chiefly by private subscription for the library of the Royal Irish Academy, it is to the memory of Petrie, and to the living labours of Dr Todd and Dr Reeves, that her gratitude will first offer its acknowledgments. But Petrie and his learned compeers could have achieved little without the official genius which, inspired by him, seized on the opportunity of making the Irish acquainted with themselves, through their own scholars and their own literature; and, in future tributes to the merits of the great band of archæologists, the death of the elder of whom has left a blank in the intellectual circles of Dublin, the name of Sir Thomas Larcom will claim a co-ordinate commemoration.

It may be interesting to adduce, as incidental evidence that the battle of Clontarf was described by an eyewitness, the fact stated in the MS. that the conflict commenced at early morning, and that it was high

tide at the time. It lasted all that day (April 23, 1014), and was terminated by the return of the tide in the evening. "The fact has been verified by astronomical calculations, and the inference is that the author of the Chronicle, if not himself an eyewitness, must have derived his information from those who were themselves eyewitnesses."

Ferguson and his wife, absent on their vacation rambles in 1864, were, as already stated, joined in Sligo by their young English friends, Henry and William Winterbotham. "I come to Ireland for the enjoyment of your society," wrote the elder brother; "and wherever you are pleased to delve, I am ready to hold the hod." They were the magnets that attracted the Rev. Hercules Dickinson—now Dean of the Chapel Royal. The party before their departure from Sligo were joined by Petrie, Stokes, and his daughter Margaret. They moved on together through Donegal, and had established themselves in the district of Glencolumbkille for antiquarian work, when, on a very wet and stormy day, Dr Todd joined them from Dublin. He was chilled by the long drive, his eyes were affected by the wind, and his health much impaired during that tour in Donegal. Dr Stokes, in his 'Life of Petrie,' has thus described the region in which the antiquarian friends sojourned in the inclement autumn of 1864:—

> This was the last of these delightful excursions, never to be forgotten by those who had the happiness to accompany him [Dr Petrie]. The days spent in explorations passed too rapidly, while every evening he would play on his violin some

of the old melodies of the country. Yet while his kindly manner and love of nature gave such a charm to the days passed with him, it was impossible to resist a feeling of sadness at the thought that he was then paying his farewell visit to scenes and objects which a lifelong labour had truly made his own.

Notwithstanding the dreary and tempestuous weather, the group of friends had much enjoyment in congenial society, added to the interest of the antiquities and scenery. The fine cliffs, which at Slieve League rise to the height of 1800 feet above the Atlantic, are belted with lichens of brilliant hues. But in the autumn of 1864 the country, the crops, and the inhabitants suffered from the almost continuous rains, which made the chief food of the people — the potatoes — more than usually wet and *waxy*. Sickness supervened, and when it became known that a great physician was sojourning at the hotel, Stokes was besieged every morning with petitions that he would visit the sufferers in their cabins. The Doctor, ever ready to assist the poor, would take down all addresses, return to the breakfast-table, crumble some bread, crush a few lumps of sugar, and to these add a little white powder — probably some preparation of soda or magnesia — which he carried in a tiny box. With these ingredients he made pills, which he placed in his waistcoat-pocket. We started every day for some scene of archæological interest, where all but the Doctor and the present writer were set to sketch the various objects. They then proceeded on a round of medical visits. The sufferers were generally aged

peasants. "A weakness about the heart," an "oppression on the chest," and rheumatic pains, were the ills of which they chiefly complained. Dr Stokes's manner was full of sympathy. He listened, with his hand on the pulse, to all they had to say, with the utmost patience. Then he prescribed, invariably, the same remedy. With the pills—which were to be taken at stated intervals—he produced half-a-crown, with strict instructions to apply it to the purchase of mutton-chops, one of which was to be eaten daily. When rallied by his companion on the uniform treatment ordered for every complaint, "My dear friend," he would say, "in whatever way these poor people describe their sensations, their ailments spring from the same cause: no change of diet, and their only food a wet root. The chops will do them good so long as they last. As for the rheumatism, it is slightly intensified by the wetness of this season—that is all." He would discourse, as we made our way across meadows, bogs, and streams, from one poor habitation to another, on the philosophy of health and disease, and extort the admiration and respect of his listener by the wide range of his knowledge, and the depth of his sympathy for the suffering and sorrowful.

The labours of the day were closed by a festive dinner, ending with a bowl of punch, untouched by the juniors, but enjoyed in moderation by the seniors. Conversation, flavoured with "Attic salt," genial humour, and sparkling wit, combined to make the repast

"The feast of reason and the flow of soul."

Then came the solace and refreshment of music. Petrie's violin was placed entreatingly in his hands by the younger members of the party, whose reverent and affectionate attentions to the elders were touching to witness, and soon

> "Amid the strings his fingers strayed
> And an uncertain warbling made,
> And oft he shook his hoary head.
> But when he caught the measure wild,
> The old man raised his face and smiled."

In his 'Life of Petrie' Stokes dwells on his love of music and expressive rendering of Irish airs.

But his deepest and most lasting love was for the ancient airs of Ireland; and the true expression he gave to them can hardly ever again be equalled. Many now are gone of the happy circles that gathered round him at his own house, or at those of his friends—men of letters, artists, poets, archæologists, all lovers of Ireland, and true workers for her, whose hearts were kindled and purified by these perfect strains. Those who now remain will often love to dwell in memory on the graceful figure of the old man with his violin, turning, as he used to do, his back upon his audience, and facing the wall, on which, perhaps, was hanging one of his own paintings, harmonious as the strains which he was pouring forth, while his graceful form swayed gently to the rhythm of the air that he was playing. From his early boyhood, whenever he heard an air which in any degree touched his feelings, or appeared to him to be either unpublished or a better version than any which had been already printed, he never neglected to note it down; and his summer ramblings through most of Ireland—for objects more immediately connected with his professional pursuits—afforded him constant opportunities of increasing the collection which so early in life he had commenced to form, and which at last amounted to many hundreds.

Petrie's services to his native land were soon to end.

Little more than a year after the visit to Donegal he peacefully closed his eyes on this mortal scene, and passed away, deeply lamented, on the 17th of January 1866. "He died as a Christian man should die," wrote his biographer, "not in triumph, nor yet in gloom, but in calm resignation to the will of Him who doeth all things well."

One of the early recollections which Dr Petrie has left on record was of a touching scene of which when a boy he was an unwilling spectator. His father, an artist, had executed the commission of Sarah Curran, daughter to that distinguished orator and member of the Irish Bar, John Philpot Curran. She had been betrothed to Robert Emmet, whose life paid the penalty of his complicity in the rebellion of 1803; and knowing that Mr James Petrie had painted Emmet, she requested that a portrait from memory, aided by his former studies of the head, should be painted for her, and that when completed she might visit his studio alone. A day and hour were named by the artist; but his boy, unaware of the arrangement, was seated in a recess of the window, concealed by the curtain, when the lady, closely veiled, entered the room. She approached the easel, and gazed long and earnestly on the picture of her lover, then leaned her head against the wall and wept bitterly. The boy, attracted by her sobs, knew not how to act. She was quite unconscious of his presence, and before he could make up his mind what he ought to do, she recovered her self-control, drew down her veil, and left the room.

Dr Stokes has dwelt on the purity and gentleness of character and sensitive and delicate nature of Petrie, and the great amount of happiness these qualities secured for him throughout life:—

In the society of friends, and of the many accomplished strangers who visited him, he took a keen delight; while his richly stored mind, his singular tact, his exercise of that higher power of criticism which discovers the good achieved rather than the shortcomings in works of literature and of art, gave a rare charm to his society. Though partial to friendly discussions, he ever defended his views with firmness and with spirit. Yet such was the gentleness and grace of his manner that the hours passed in his company were not to be forgotten.

He often declared to the writer, that though always a poor man, his life had been one of great enjoyment, greater than falls to the lot of most men, and that his chief happiness was in the society of so many loving, lasting, and intellectual friends.

While engaged on this biography of Dr George Petrie, Dr Stokes wrote to Ferguson the following note:—

My dear Ferguson,—I am dealing with our visit to Co. Donegal in the last chapter of Petrie's Life. Could you let me have your note-book about the cromlechs at Malin Mor and the cave under the church at Glencolumbkille?—Ever affectionately yours, W. Stokes.

When the 'Life of Petrie' was completed Dr Stokes, on Christmas Day 1868, called at 20 North Great George's Street with a copy inscribed "To Samuel Ferguson, Esq., LL.D., Q.C., from his attached friend the writer;" and in a note, when he found that Ferguson was absent, added:—

I know so little of the literary world that I have no one to consult but yourself in this matter. Should the book cover its expenses, I propose handing any balance that may accrue to the Misses Petrie.

I could easily have made the book larger, and am almost sorry I did not do so, yet I was anxious to keep it within moderate bounds. But I have done my best under difficulties; and they say that what a man does do is his best.—With kind remembrances to Mrs Ferguson, ever affectionately yours,

W. STOKES.

Ferguson thanked him for the gift in the following letter:—

You have done your work nobly and faithfully. I am particularly pleased with the chapter on the Ordnance Survey Memoir. The dear old man lives again in these pages, and gives out his full character in all its phases of gentleness and force.—With thanks and every good wish.

The copy of Ferguson's 'Lays of the Western Gael' sent to Dr Todd had associations for him connected with their time in Donegal, as will appear in the following letter:—

MY DEAR FRIEND,—Thank you very much for your beautiful book, which comes fragrant with memories of Carrick, Sliabb Liacc and Glencolumbkille. But it is at the same time to me a temptation and a snare; for my eyes, although slowly getting better, are not yet so far recovered as to enable me to read with impunity.—Ever most truly yours,

J. H. TODD.

When Ferguson found himself, at a somewhat later period, at Wildbad Gastein in the Salzburg district, he wrote to Dr Todd, and suggested that he should join him and try the waters, which issue from the snow-mountains so hot that even when they have

been conveyed in pipes for a considerable distance they have to be cooled before use by admixture with ordinary water. Dr Todd's reply was as follows:—

Thank you very much for your kind letter. I would be delighted to visit Salzburg, from its connection with Ireland. Its founder, St Rodbert (*Hibernicè* Raffertach), and its famous bishop, Virgil (Fergal), the geometer (who narrowly escaped being condemned as a heretic for believing in the Antipodes), were both Irish, the latter certainly.

The account you give of the Wild. baths is certainly also very tempting—especially when combined with the pleasure of enjoying your and Mrs Ferguson's company, and searching with you whether any recollections or traditions of Ireland still float around the Monastery of St Peter. I have often thought that a history of the Irish ecclesiastics who were founders of churches on the Continent and in Great Britain would be an interesting book; but my powers of working are not what they were. How strange it is that the proposal to destroy a Church to which England and half of Europe owes its Christianity, should be received with applause by so many here and on the Continent! But I have forgotten to tell you that it is impossible for me to accept your most kind invitation,—first, because I am not up to the journey; and secondly, because my doctors say that water is not the cure for me. . . .

The St Bric whose chapel you mention was, I suspect, a native of Wales, who followed St Germain of Auxerre to the Continent and became famous in Brittany; but the place now called St Brieuc in Armorica was not founded by him, but dedicated to him three centuries after his death. He must have been contemporary with St Patrick. His day was May 1. This would help to identify him, if you find that May 1 is also the day kept at St Bric's Chapel at the Gross Glökner.

Again thanking you for your kind letter, and regretting that I cannot get to you, I remain, with anxious wishes for your perfect recovery, most truly yours, J. H. Todd.

A kind letter from Dr Todd, which reached Ferguson when he was on Circuit in Armagh in the spring of 1865, conveyed the gratifying intelligence that the University of Dublin proposed to confer on him the degree of LL.D. *honoris causâ*, to which Ferguson sent the following answer:—

DEAR DR TODD,—Your note, which has been forwarded to me here, intimating the intention of the University to confer on me the honorary degree of Doctor, has given me great gratification. I have desired nothing more than the approval of the illustrious body which thus deigns to recognise my poor endeavours. I shall very gladly receive the honour the University designs for me; and I beg you will convey to the Board my grateful acknowledgment for so valuable a mark of their good opinion.

This agreeable intelligence was communicated by Ferguson to his wife in the following letter:—

Nothing could be more gratifying than Dr Todd's letter. It gave me real pleasure, and I am sure as much for your sake as my own. I write my acknowledgments to-day accepting the honour with alacrity. I have seen the Robinsons. Mrs R. somewhat depressed, but alive as ever to any intellectual pursuit. We had a search through the books in the breakfast-parlour for an illustration I wanted of a Bornean war-canoe with an upper deck, in which she was as active and interested as you ever saw her.

Mrs Robinson, of whom Ferguson speaks in his letter, was the second wife of Dr Romney Robinson the Astronomer; and her sister, Mrs Butler, was the widow of Dr R. Butler, Dean of Clonmacnois. They were the youngest children of Richard Lovell Edgeworth, and half-sisters of Maria, who was some forty-five years their senior. Lucy, Mrs Robinson, delicately

fair, fragile, *petite*, is still living, and Harriet, Mrs Butler, not long deceased. Both were very remarkable women, highly cultured and original in character, and their companionship and the brilliant conversation of Dr Robinson made the Armagh Observatory a delightful house. "The Trio," as they were called by their intimates, were dear and attached friends of Ferguson and his wife. "The Ferguson Arms" was ever ready to receive them when they came to Dublin. When her husband was on Circuit Mrs Ferguson often sojourned at Armagh with these delightful friends, and when the Assizes were over Ferguson would rejoin her at the Observatory, and if possible snatch a few days to spend there before returning to Dublin.

Dr Robinson was almost sightless for many years, and had to undergo two operations for cataract; but Mrs Butler, whose health was more robust than her sister's, zealously attended to some departments of Observatory duties. She registered the course of the winds, rainfall, barometer, thermometer, &c., &c., and read aloud the most abstruse works to the learned Astronomer.

"Do you remember what Herodotus says on the subject?" Dr Robinson would inquire of his friend Ferguson, *apropos* to some discussion; and if he received an answer in the negative, it was his habit to turn to his sister-in-law. "Harriet, my dear, will you fetch me from the library the book I want? You will find it on the third shelf, left-hand side. It is the seventh volume from the end." The little, spare, but active old lady would go at once, and return promptly with the required volume. Then she would proceed

to read in Greek—or whatever learned language the book might be written in—the passage indicated by Robinson, who could generally direct her to the page, and say on what part of the page the required reference would be found. If an ignorant listener asked for enlightenment, Mrs Butler would at once translate the classic into English with perfect fluency. Mrs Butler to the latest day of her life—and she lived to an advanced age—was an unwearied reader. She was indefatigable in acts of service and kindness, somewhat eccentric in matters of dress, being utterly indifferent to the fashions, yet with the bearing of a perfect gentlewoman. She wrote a life of her husband, and of her sister Maria Edgeworth—printed for private circulation only. This has been the basis of Mr Hare's recent biography. When the delightful home at the Observatory was broken up by the death of Dr Robinson, the widowed sisters settled at Glasthule, within reach of Dublin and of their friends at 20 North Great George's Street. Here is a note, written in Mrs Butler's bold clear handwriting, to Ferguson, who had sent her a copy of his translation of St Patrick's 'Confession':—

GLASTHULE LODGE, *January* 28, 1886.

O MY DEAR SIR SAMUEL,—How kind of you! The Patrician Documents just arrived. How can I thank you enough for it? So valuable a gift, and such an honour to me at any time; but that you thought of me, and took the trouble to write the inscription when you had been so ill, is a kindness the most flattering and gratifying to me. Thank you, thank you.—Your grateful HARRIET BUTLER.

Mrs Robinson, unlike her sister, was choice in the matter of dress, liked pretty things, and looked pretty in dainty silks and laces. She still survives—tenderly cared for by her step-daughter, the wife of Sir George Gabriel Stokes, in their home at Cambridge. When Lady Ferguson visited her in the summer of 1894, Mrs Robinson said to her, "My memory is now like a necklace of pearls of which the string is cut: the pearls of remembrance are there, but they are unconnected. I cannot place them in sequence, I am too old. But my heart is still young, and I love you as fervently as ever." In September 1895—faithful to a promise made when Mrs Robinson left Ireland—Lady Ferguson revisited her at Cambridge. "Oh how I thank you!" she exclaimed; "the sound of your voice brings back former days when those we both loved were with us,—days never to be forgotten! though my memory has failed for all recent occurrences."

When Ferguson in 1878 received the honour of Knighthood she wrote as follows:—

"Honour to whom honour is due."

So we congratulate the Lord Lieutenant that he shows he has the good taste and *savoir faire* to bestow duly the honours in his power.

And much do we rejoice, my dear Sir, that you know how to accept your due!

I wish you felt stronger; but still we flatter ourselves, though you do complain of feebleness, that the accolade will not have overwhelmed you, and that you will actually feel the stronger for the sense of being publicly appreciated.

Tell your own beloved "Molly," with my love, she must not hold her little head so high above her old acquaintances as

not to allow them to sympathise with her satisfaction on your account, or not let them be very much pleased at her own part in the honour. (Indeed I know few people who would be so little affected by being "be-Ladyed" as your dear romantic wife.)

Your old friend sends his love. He has deputed me to write for him to tell you how much pleased he is. He is indeed astonishingly well, and has regained so much strength of health that we dare to hope he may get through the next two months without such a very severe attack of bronchitis as he suffered from last year and the previous one. He had not been out walking since the middle of November till last Saturday, when he did venture forth for a few minutes with the greatest enjoyment and benefit, to behold the flowers, the grass.

"The common air, the skies,
To him was opening paradise."

My sister joins us heartily in our pleasure and congratulations, and let me say how very much we are gratified by your writing yourself to tell us.—Truly and affectionately,

L. J. Robinson.

When the Fergusons with their niece had left their friends at the Observatory after a week's visit, Mrs Robinson wrote:—

My dear Lady Ferguson,—I hope you and dear Amabel were not too much chilled yesterday by the wintry cold of the air. It was kindly bright and pleasant to the eye, so that I should hope you had a pleasant journey. . . .

Dr R. took an hour's drive, and enjoyed the sunshine, and wanted the window to be opened; but his tyrant would not let him have a breath of the very inimical north wind.

He bewailed our losses all day long, and at the same time rejoiced in the week's great pleasure he had had, most thankful for having been permitted to be so well the most part of the time.—Ever affectionately yours, L. J. Robinson.

In the later years, when as a widow Mrs Robinson

and her sister resided at Glasthule Lodge, and Sir Samuel's last—and fatal—illness had commenced, his old friend wrote the following letters :—

We read of the riots at Leicester with so much anxiety for yours about your brother there, and wish so much to hear how you feel, and what you hear about him, and how dear Sam is, and your own dear self, that I must tell you so, and ask you to let your niece write me a word about all. You cannot have time to write to every one, and every one must be longing as we are about you and your anxiety on every side.

The state of public affairs is most terrible. The reign of Mob is, I fear, becoming established in England as well as Ireland!

I wish, I wish we could aid you further than by our hearts' service of sympathy and anxiety and love.

GLASTHULE LODGE, *February* 27, 1886.

DEAREST LADY FERGUSON,—The day has been abominable, never abating, so I could not venture out, and only write this line to say how sorry not to have gone as you so kindly invited us. I am quite shocked to see in the paper the death of Lady Kane! and am sorry that you, who had so warm a regard for her, have this loss of a loved friend. How very much relief and heart-pleasure your note gave me I cannot write of quickly, about my dearly loved and prized friend of my husband and of my own self, being better, and able to take an airing! and *sun you* with the delightful hope of his recovery and restoration to his former self, perhaps in better health than he has had of late years. God grant it to our constant prayers for him, and, dear, for your own self!

Oh, the only comfort possible to human hearts is that He orders all for us! May He keep up your health and strength! —Ever your loving L. J. ROBINSON.

CHAPTER XX.

1846–1886.

FURTHER FRIENDSHIPS.

"Per la bontà uomo è gentile veramente."
—DANTE.

"Nor deem that acts heroic wait on chance!
The Man's whole life preludes the single deed
That shall decide if his inheritance
Be with the gifted few of matchless breed,
Or with the unnoticed herd that only sleep and feed."
—LOWELL.

DENIS FLORENCE MACCARTHY, born in Dublin in 1817, wrote in the 'Nation' under the name "Desmond." Called to the Irish Bar in 1846, he soon afterwards edited 'The Poets and Dramatists of Ireland' and 'The Book of Irish Ballads,' the latter volume dedicated to Ferguson because "enriched by so many beautiful efforts of his genius."

Mr MacCarthy subsequently published two volumes of his own poetry, which included "The Bell Founder" and many lovely lyrics. One of these conveys a hint of his approaching marriage:—

"For ah! the belovèd at length has come
Like the breath of May from afar!
And my heart is lit with her gentle eyes,
As the heavens by the evening star.
'Tis this that brightens the darkest sky
And lengthens the faintest ray,
And makes me feel that to heart or eye
There was never so sweet a May
As this
Sweet May! sweet May!"

Happy in his domestic life, the young poet threw himself with enthusiasm into his chief literary work, the translation of Calderon's dramas. In his introduction to the plays rendered from the Spanish, MacCarthy, in a poem on the second centenary of Calderon, May 25, 1881, thus wrote of the dramatist:—

"Transcendent Poet, to whose hand was given
The Harp of David and the Lyre of Heaven;
Whose pen, unstained by any human dross,
Proclaimed the Crimson glories of the Cross;
Whose wondrous *Autos* opened to man's view
Scene after scene, creations ever new;
Worlds unbeheld within his vision brought,
And peopled with the phantom forms of Thought:
How can I speak of thee, O Bard divine;
How raise my humble Muse to worship thine;
How fitly dwell on thy immortal page,
Thou *Wonderful Magician* of the Stage?
. . . . . .
Happy for Spain, that proudly she may claim
The priceless heirloom of each deathless name,
And in each deathless name her noblest son,
Cervantes, Lopè, and great Calderon."

Thus did MacCarthy estimate the genius of the

dramatist, fifteen of whose plays he translated into English verse. The admirable manner in which he accomplished this labour of love has been told by competent judges. The poet Longfellow wrote to thank him for his work "in the vast and flowery field of Calderon." Mr Ticknor, in his 'History of Spanish Literature,' 1863, also commends MacCarthy's work:—

> It is, I think, one of the boldest attempts ever made in English verse. It is, too, as it seems to me, remarkably successful. Not that *asonantes* can be made fluent or graceful in English, or easily perceptible to an English ear, but that the Spanish air and character of Calderon are so happily preserved. . . .
>
> Calderon is a poet who, whenever he is translated, should have his very excesses, both in thought and manner, fully produced, in order to give a faithful idea of what is grandest and most distinctive in his genius. Mr MacCarthy has done this, I conceive, to a degree which I had previously considered impossible. Nothing, I think, in the English language will give us so true an impression of what is most characteristic of the Spanish drama; perhaps I ought to say, of what is most characteristic of Spanish poetry generally.

MacCarthy in his preface compares in a very luminous way the aims, methods, and genius of Calderon with those of Shakespeare:—

> In the English theatre the characters are always the representatives of individuals; in the Spanish, of classes. The man is everything on the English stage; on the Spanish, he is nothing. In the former, we look on the actors in the drama as beings of a kindred nature with our own; in the latter (at least in its tragedy), as merely personifications of the virtues or vices to be represented. In Shakespeare the characters are flesh and blood—where none are so monstrously wicked as not to be

relieved by an occasional ray of a better nature, and none so sterling as not to exhibit a little of the common alloy of humanity. In Calderon they are cast in an inflexible mould of virtue or vice, and preserve their golden or iron rigidity to the last. Shakespeare's figures have the warmth and colouring of the canvas,—Calderon's the fixed and colder outline of the marble. In the one we have the incalculable vicissitudes of life; in the other, the inevitable certainty of fate. In Calderon it is ever the constant sunshine or the unbroken gloom of his climate; in Shakespeare the dark and bright—the smiles and tears of our own. Shakespeare possessed higher qualities, and was apparently the deeper thinker. Calderon possessed qualities in which the other was deficient, and was perhaps, in some of the attributes of the poet, but little his inferior. In the worship of external nature the Englishman, with all his warmth, is cold compared with the Spaniard; in the revelations of her mysteries and the inward workings of the soul, the latter must be pronounced superficial when compared to the former. Shakespeare invented characters in abundance, but few plots; Calderon invented innumerable plots, but few characters. The one was fertile in delineation; the other, in invention. In fact, both are admirable of their kind, but both are founded on totally different principles of dramatic propriety, and we may relish and admire the one without being unjustly and unnecessarily blind to the merits of the other.

The Irish poet had caught his inspiration as regards the Spanish dramatist from Shelley's renderings of scenes from Calderon. "His resplendent pages," he tells us, had shown him "how divine a thing translation can be made." The generous enthusiasm of MacCarthy for Shelley's renderings increases our admiration of his own. Both loved "everything that was Nature's," and Schlegel says of Calderon that his poetry, "whatever the subject may ostensibly be, is an unceasing hymn of joy on the splendours of creation."

The stimulus of a critique in the 'New York Tablet,' from the pen of the Hon. T. D'Arcy M'Gee, no doubt had its influence in inducing MacCarthy to render from the "Tain-bo-Cuailgne" the story of Ferdiah and his combat at the ford with Cuchullin. M'Gee, whose heart ever beat true to Ireland, had urged that the first claim on every man of letters was that of his native land and its literature. This conviction he expressed in his review of the translations from Calderon :—

> Very highly do we reverence Calderon, and very highly value his translator; yet, if it be not presumptuous to say so, we venture to suggest that MacCarthy might find nearer home another work still worthier of his genius than these translations. Now that he has got the imperial ear by bringing his costly wares from afar, are there not laurels to be gathered as well in Ireland as in Spain? The author of "The Bell-Founder," of "St Brendan's Voyage," of "The Foray of Con O'Donell," and "The Pillar Towers," needs no prompting to discern what abundant materials for a new department of English poetry are to be found almost unused on Irish ground. May we not hope that in that field or forest he may find his appointed work, adding to the glory of first worthily introducing Calderon to the English readers of this century the still higher glory of doing for the neglected history of his fatherland what he has chivalrously done for the illustrious Spaniard?

Some passages from the unpublished "Tain-bo-Cuailgne" had been cited by Ferguson's wife in her 'Irish before the Conquest.' Before the publication of a second edition, Mr Denis H. Kelly had intrusted her with his translation of the epic, from which she made copious extracts. These she placed in the hands of

her artist and poet friends. One of the former, Mr Burchett, the late Head Master of the South Kensington School of Art, in returning the manuscript warmly expressed his appreciation of the "Tain":—

I have just now finished my transcript of the great "Cow-Foray," having filled forty-three foolscap folios closely written. This has taken me longer than I expected, and I could not make up my mind to leave any portion of it except such passages as you had printed. I felt, I assure you, while doing it, like the jackal for some future Homer; and the more I become acquainted with the early traditions, the more one feels the classic ground on which we tread.

You have conferred a very great pleasure upon me, and I sincerely trust that I have not occasioned you any inconvenience by my long detention of the manuscript.

Mr MacCarthy returned the extracts from the "Tain" with the following letter:—

My dear Mrs Ferguson,—I return you the extracts from Mr Kelly's translation of the "Tain-bo-Cuailgne," with many thanks. Though the account of the fight between Cuchullin and Ferdiah is given in a very abridged form, it interested me greatly as being evidently taken from a different copy of the "Tain" from that which contains the episode of Ferdiah, which I have endeavoured to throw into a metrical form. If, as I infer, Mr Kelly has translated the whole "Tain," I would like very much to see it. I hope you will excuse my having copied your own extracts from it, of which, however, I of course shall make no public use. Burton's letter pleased me very much, though I think he is a little too severe on the literal style, adopted by most translators from the Irish. The passage he particularly objects to I find no difficulty in understanding; but that arises probably from my being, at least by descent, a Munsterman. What a grand subject for Burton's pencil would be the advance of

Cuchullin to the ford of battle, with the chariot surrounded by Bocanachs and Bananachs and the wild people of the Glens!

Read my version of the fight with indulgence.

The affecting incident in the "Tain" of the combat at the ford, and Ferdiah's death at the hands of the much-loved companion whom he has challenged, has been treated by MacCarthy, De Vere, and Ferguson. The lament of Cuchullin is thus given in the "Ferdiah" of the first-named writer:—

"Until Ferdiah sought the Ford,
I played but with the spear and sword:
How dear to me, ah! who can know?
This golden pillar here laid low,
This mighty tree so strong and tall,
The chief, the champion of us all!
. . . . . .
Until Ferdiah sought the Ford,
I played but with the spear and sword:
Through me the friend I loved is dead,
A cloud is ever on my head—
The mountain form, the giant frame,
Is now a shadow and a name."

In Mr De Vere's "Foray of Queen Maeve" the hero thus apostrophises the victim, who rushed on his own destruction:—

"'Ferdiah! On their head the curse descend
Who sent thee to thy death! We meet no more;
Never while sun, and moon, and earth endure.
. . . . . .
We ate together of the self-same dish:
We couched together 'neath the self-same shield:
Now living man I stand, and he lies dead!'
He raised again his head: once more he sang:

'Each battle was a game, a jest, a sport,
Till came, foredoomed, Ferdiah, to the Ford.
I loved the warrior though I pierced his heart.
Each battle was a game, a jest, a sport,
Till stood, self-doomed, Ferdiah by the Ford.
Huge lion of the forestry of war;
Fair, central pillar of the House of Fame;
But yesterday he towered above the world;
This day he lies along the earth, a shade.'"

In Ferguson's "Tain Quest" the emotions aroused in the breasts of King and Court by the recital of the story of Cuchullin and Ferdiah are chiefly dwelt on. The monarch at the feast had called on his bard to chant the famous "Tain." But the lay was lost, although the minstrel had journeyed far in hope of its recovery:—

Northward to the thunder-smitten, jagg'd Cuchullin peaks of Skye,
Great Cuchullin's name and glory fill'd the land from north to south.

It was reserved for the son of the bard to recover the forgotten story of the "Great Cow-Foray," whose words had "tramp of heroes in them," and his father chanted them at the royal feast:—

Light of manhood's generous ardour, under brows relaxing shone,
When, mid-ford, on Uladh's border, young Cuchullin stood alone.

. . . . . .

What, another and another, and he still for combat calls?
Ah, the lot on thee, his brother sworn in arms, Ferdiah, falls;
And the hall with wild applauses sobb'd like woman ere they wist,
When the champions in the pauses of the deadly combat kiss'd.

The earliest of MacCarthy's Odes was recited in 1855, at the inauguration of a statue to the recently deceased Earl of Belfast. The Centenary Ode to O'Connell was delivered August 6, 1875; and that to Moore, May 28, 1879. Of the latter Ferguson wrote to its author:—

20 NORTH GREAT GEORGE'S STREET, 28*th May* 1880.

In your Ode you had to contend with two great difficulties —writing on a prescribed theme, and for an audience requiring to be oratorically as well as poetically appealed to. The effect, I am told, was all that could be desired; and speaking of the composition as it reads, I use no flattery in saying that I do not know any one who would have done it so well. Still, in my poor judgment, you will enjoy the higher lasting life the poet aspires to in your lyrics, and I long to have you renew the sweet strains of the morning—"The Bridal," "The Bells," "The Shamrock from the Irish Shore." The Irish shore was never, in my memory, so unlovely in its moral and social aspects; but my lot has fallen on it, such as it is, and what remains to me of life and of nature's gifts shall be spent in its service.

We had our friend De Vere here last night, when we read his father's drama of "Mary Tudor" before a chosen and capable audience. Our friend could not but have been gratified by its reception. You will be present, I hope, on some of our lyrical evenings.

In the spring of 1882 MacCarthy was present at a literary gathering at 20 North Great George's Street. Ferguson and his wife were grieved to see him look ill and depressed. It was his last social evening. He could not be said to have enjoyed it. He told Lady Ferguson that he did not feel equal to conversation with strangers, but would like to sit quietly in a corner

and talk with her. As far as possible she devoted herself to him, and tried to cheer him. He spoke of a "birthday-book" of the dead, which his daughter had designed, with appropriate lines from the poets on the awakening to eternal life. He left early, and a few days later was at rest and listening to "that hymn which seraphs chant above." He had never recovered the death of his wife. Before he lost her he was witty and brilliant, ready with jest and repartee. He died on the 7th of April, and Ferguson in his address to the Royal Irish Academy on the 10th alluded to the sad event. He received next day the following letter from the poet's son :—

I beg to offer to you our most sincere and heartfelt thanks for the kindly and generous *éloge* pronounced by you last evening on my dear father. Your noble poems were his favourite study. The last letter he wrote was to you or Lady Ferguson.—I am, dear Sir Samuel, yours most sincerely,

JOHN MACCARTHY.

William Charles Bonaparte-Wyse was born on the 20th of February 1826. He was son of Sir Thomas Wyse of the Manor of St John, Waterford, by his wife the Princess Letitia, daughter of Lucien Bonaparte, Prince of Canino, brother of the Emperor Napoleon I. Sir Thomas Wyse had held office under Lord Melbourne's Administration, and was Secretary of the Board of Control, and subsequently British Minister at Athens.

As MacCarthy had devoted himself to the literature of Spain, so did W. C. Bonaparte-Wyse to that of the

Langue d'oc. The Provençal dialect of the Troubadours of the twelfth century is still a living tongue in Southern France and Northern Spain, and Mr Bonaparte-Wyse, who spent much of his youth in Avignon and formed friendships with the poets of the Langue d'oc, spoke and wrote the language with fluency. Mistral, Tavan, Aubanel, Roumanille, Alexsandri, and Azaïs, in Provence, and Balaguer, Cutchet, Ascensio, on the Spanish side of the Pyrenees, were, as well as their Irish comrade, *Félibres*, leading members of the poetic brotherhood of the *Félibrige*. William C. Bonaparte-Wyse published at Avignon in 1868 his volume of poems written in the Langue d'oc, 'Li Parpaioun Blu,' which he presented, "with the best compliments of the author, to The Poet Ferguson, from his admirer of many years." These poems were welcomed by his *confrères*, who pronounced that since the days of the Royal Troubadour, Richard Cœur-de-Lion, "on n'avait pas vu d'Anglais ni d'étranger quelconque, chanter si gentiment dans notre langue."

In 1882 Mr Bonaparte-Wyse published his 'Li Piado de la Princesso,' which he presented to "the illustrious author of 'The Forging of the Anchor,' Sir Samuel Ferguson, with the kindest regards of William C. B.-Wyse." This volume of poems was also enthusiastically welcomed by the *Félibrige*. One of them, Alphonse Roque-Ferrier, asserts that "nul ne pourra refuser d'appliquer à l'auteur des 'Piado de la Princesso' une partie des paroles qu'il adressait à Mistral, 'Vous aurez magnifiquement vécu votre vie

d'homme, en gardant devant le monde la position héroïque d'un poète qui proteste en faveur de sa langue et de sa race.'"

The "Omega" of this volume has the following sonnet in English:—

OMEGA.

"Our task is ended, and these purple flowers,
Gathered for true-love of the Speech I prize,
Are now at length consigned in ordered wise
Within the glass-house of this book of ours;
But, forehead bent, me sadness overpowers,
And small my pride in what before me lies.
Ah! vain and dull to disillusioned eyes
Seems all this flowery growth of vanished hours!
'Tis that I harbour a superb Ideal,
Which, like the blazing Sun a rushlight's ray,
Quenches and drowns my pallid rhymes unreal:
'Tis that the higher mine aspirings wander,
I mark the more, uprising far away,
Alps over Alps . . . and wistfully I ponder!"

Mr Bonaparte-Wyse, with his wife and family, eventually settled at Waterford. He took an interest in its antiquities, as will appear in the following letter and sonnet. Its subject, Reginald's Tower, is a conspicuous object on the quay at Waterford, where it stands in perfect preservation, still inhabited, a relic of the Vikings in the town which the Danes founded some eight hundred years ago:—

MANOR OF ST JOHN'S, *October* 12, 1875.

MY DEAR DR FERGUSON,—In answer to your query about "Reginald's Tower," I shall take an early opportunity of letting you know the result of my personal examination.

Unfortunately I am just now laid up with a touch of the gout, which prevents my going into town. One query I can, however, manage to answer at once from my library arm-chair. The stairs are carried up in the thickness of the outer wall, precisely similar to what I have noticed in the old Castle of Moussa, Shetland Isles, which I visited in the year 1851, and which struck me at the time as having a common Scandinavian origin with the famous landmark of my native city.

By the way, as you have brought the subject of Reginald's Tower on the *tapis*, will you kindly permit me to send you the enclosed copy of a sonnet (one of a succession of such I have perpetrated during my sojourn in Waterford, in illustration of scenes of local history)? As you perceive, I allude in the 13th line to the very subject of one of your queries. On a former occasion, if you remember, you expressed yourself rather favourably of my poetical capacity; and I do not anticipate that you will now disapprove of what I am engaged about. If ever I print my little work, it would afford me great pleasure to be permitted to dedicate it to the sinewy poet of "Congal," which, whatever others may do, I do not cease to regard as far and away the most thoroughly Irish *chef d'œuvre* of the century. Mr R. H. (Orion) Horne, the well-known poet and dramatist, who has been staying at my house during the entire of last month, was highly pleased with its archaic vigour, being already greatly prejudiced in your favour from his acquaintance with the "Forging of the Anchor," and (though an Englishman), thanks to his intimacy with Sir C. G. Duffy (whom he knew for many years in Australia), he is not by any means ignorant of the best pieces of the Irish Muse.

You shall hear from me shortly again relative to the other queries. And in the meantime, with kindest regards of my wife to Mrs Ferguson, not forgetting my best remembrances, I remain, yours most truly,

WILLIAM C. BONAPARTE-WYSE.

REGINALD'S TOWER.

"A mighty man was Reginald the Dane:
Well could his fist the thickest helm indent;
The Raven followed him where'er he went,
And grim his smile amid great heaps of slain.
What time the sea-gull shrieked and the tost main
Becked him to battle-joys with fierce content,
He shoved from shore his stranded armament
And hurried seawards, mad for gore and gain.
Returning thence, one lovely summer morn,
Laden with loot, and many a golden torque
Which from the wild O'Feoldins he had torn,
He bade his warriors pile this orbèd work
(With stairs enwreathing it between its walls),
That still its sight his fame to men recalls."

On the 12th of August 1886, when all that was mortal of Sir Samuel Ferguson was removed from North Great George's Street to St Patrick's Cathedral, just as the funeral procession was about to start a wreath of laurel arrived from Waterford, sent by Mr Bonaparte-Wyse, with a request that it would be laid on his grave in testimony of his admiration of the genius of the poet whom he so highly regarded. His own health was much shattered, and he was a great sufferer from gout. A few years later he left Ireland for the sunny South, but only reached his beloved Avignon to die. In the autumn of 1892, broken down by pain, he penned his last sad and desponding lines :—

THANATOPSIS.

"In the midst of the flowers and the sunbeams
Have I come at last to die,
Worried and wearied and wasted
By Life's stupendous lie;

In the midst of the flowers and the sunbeams
To breathe my final breath ;
In the midst of the flowers and the sunbeams
To kiss the lips of death :

Of death—the sole name of solace—
Conceded to sad mankind,
For all the rest are fancies
And ashes and shadows and wind :
In the midst of the flowers and the sunbeams,
In the land of mine olden love,
Where the flowers are sweet on the mountains,
And the sun burns bright above."

The Dean of Westminster, Dr Richard Chenevix Trench, came to Dublin as Archbishop in 1864. He had many qualifications for that important post. He was Irish by birth and connection. He was author of standard works in Theology and Literature. He was a poet, and his verse was characterised by elegance and sweetness. He was more of a High Churchman than were the clergy whom he came to rule, and at first the divergence occasioned some friction. But he was soon recognised as a pious and peace-loving prelate. Notwithstanding the stormy period of Disestablishment and Prayer-book Revision through which he piloted the Irish Church, his mild influence was felt even by his opponents. He took a deep and practical interest in the higher education of women, and aided in the establishment of Alexandra College, where he delivered lectures to the young ladies on Church History. To the general public he read papers on non-ecclesiastical subjects, such as the career of

Gustavus Adolphus and the works of Plutarch. His Essay on the 'Lives' and 'Morals' of this writer, which he afterwards published in book form, constitutes one of the most charming volumes in our literature. No reader of taste could open it at any page without feeling its delicate charm of style and treatment, and the ripe knowledge of the mind from whence it proceeded. Dr Trench also wrote the life of his mother, the lovely and accomplished Melesina Chenevix, whose portrait by Romney remains to attest her beauty.

Archbishop Trench, while in Dublin, instituted the Literary Club, of which Ferguson was one of the original members. Their number—strictly limited—permitted of their dining together on certain days. They were all invited to join the Club by the Archbishop on literary grounds alone, quite irrespective of creed or politics.

The Archbishop, like his friend MacCarthy, was a good Spanish scholar, and a translator of the noble literature of medieval Spain. His extensive reading was, however, more apparent in his writings than in general conversation. In society he was silent, and even sad; but with one or two friends only, he displayed the treasures of his cultured mind. Possibly the conflict of opinions which it was his duty as far as possible to guide, amid which the circumstances of the time compelled him to move, were felt by him more keenly and with a deeper sense of despondence than a younger man or one of more buoyant nature

would have yielded to. His health gave way, and in 1886 he resigned his dignities, but carried with him in his retirement—soon closed by death—the esteem even of those who opposed the prelate, and the love and reverence of all near enough to appreciate the man. One sonnet, which reveals the source of the goodness and elevation of spirit which characterised Archbishop Trench, will suffice as a sample of his shorter poems:—

"Lord, what a change within us one short hour
Spent in Thy presence will prevail to make!
What heavy burdens from our bosoms take!
What parchèd ground refresh, as with a shower!
We kneel, and all around us seems to lower;
We rise, and all, the distant and the near,
Stands forth in sunny outline, brave and clear;
We kneel how weak, we rise how full of power.
Why therefore should we do ourselves this wrong,
Or others—that we are not always strong,
That we are ever overborne with care,
That we should ever weak or heartless be,
Anxious or troubled, when with us is prayer,
And joy and strength and courage are with Thee?"

Dr Trench's successor, Lord Plunket—at the time Bishop of Meath—is also a poet. The Hymnal of the Church of Ireland contains a few of his sacred strains. "True to Church and Fatherland," here as elsewhere, is the sentiment of his patriot heart. He comes of high intellectual lineage both by father and mother, the latter being a daughter of Chief-Justice Bushe. Grandson and namesake of the great Lord Chancellor William Conyngham Plunket, his Grace,

as well as his brother, the Hon. David Plunket, recently created Lord Rathmore, has inherited that grandfather's gift of oratory. The Archbishop is a ready, graceful, and sympathetic speaker. His oratory comes from the heart. Its earnestness goes to the heart. When he addresses the young—on occasions such as Confirmations—he is impressive chiefly from his tenderness and power of sympathy. Like the preacher described by Goldsmith, who

> "Tried each art, reproved each dull delay,
> Allured to brighter worlds, and led the way,"

our Archbishop appeals to the higher elements in human nature, and illustrates his teaching by the example of a devoted life.

Lord Plunket's imaginative grasp enables him to understand, attract, and influence many who belong to a different school of thought. Members of other Communions, however strongly they may differ on points of doctrine, recognise in the Archbishop a man of God, a humble Christian, a nobleman in the highest sense of the word, and an Irishman who disinterestedly loves his country. His benevolence, his genial and generous hospitality, are not limited to those who agree in his opinions, for he is free from pharisaism as from prejudice. A character such as his is of public value everywhere, but especially so in Ireland. There, differences of race, creed, politics, and ancient enmities still tend to disunite. When men thus kept apart can be brought together on any ground common to

all, distrusts are lessened, goodwill increased, and a great moral gain achieved.

A few stanzas may be given from words written by Lord Plunket to a popular melody, as they illustrate his love for his country, and reprobation of unfilial conduct on the part of some of her sons:—

A PATRIOT'S REBUKE.

"Ye sons of Erin! who despise
The Mother Land that bare you,
Who nothing Irish love or prize,
Give ear, I will not spare you!
The stranger's jeer I do not fear,
But can I pardon ever
Those who revile their native Isle?
Oh! never, never, never.

. . . . .

Go point me out on any map
A match for green Killarney,
Or Kevin's bed, or Dunlo's gap,
Or mystic shades of Blarney,
Or Antrim's caves, or Shannon's waves—
Ah me! I doubt if ever
An Isle so fair you'll find elsewhere,
Oh! never, never, never.

. . . . .

And now, my friends, go if you will
And visit other nations,
But leave your hearts in Erin still
Among your poor relations.
The spot on earth that gave you birth
Resolve to love for ever,
And you'll repent that good intent,
Oh! never, never, never."

On reading these lines Ferguson wrote to their author:—

The verses have given me hope and pleasure more than any other expression of cultivated Irish sentiment that I have seen for many years. They breathe the very tone which it would be my own proudest ambition to elicit and sustain among the Irish upper classes and nobility.

On Lord Plunket's election to the See of Meath Ferguson wrote to him the following letter:—

October 23, 1876.

My dear Lord Bishop,—It is fortunate for the Church of Ireland that it has secured the services in so high a place of so good a man, and I am truly glad to offer you this double congratulation, for you cannot but be gratified at the selection and the manner of it. When at Old Connaught in the summer, I read in Jeremy Taylor's 'Doctor Dubitantium,' in your Lordship's library, a discourse on the freedom of the Churches, which I thought at the moment very apposite to the present position of the Church of Ireland, both as regards her independence of Rome and her attitude towards the sister Church of England. It did not occur to me then that your Lordship would so soon have to speak with a voice of authority in our Irish Councils, or I would have referred to the opinions of Taylor when I last had the pleasure of conversing with you. Your friend's work (the 'St Paul') continues to give me much entertaining instruction. I think I shall be able to add something to the curious chapter on the shipping of the ancients, and if I find I can, I shall send Dean Howson a cast from a roughly scratched design of a ship—probably Phœnician or Carthaginian—brought by Dr Acland of Oxford from Ithaca, where he found it carved on one of the steps of a temple or palace portico. But I must first see if its existence is noticed in the work of Smith of Jordanhill which the Dean refers to. . . . —Believe me very affectionately yours,

Saml. Ferguson.

When the honour of Knighthood was conferred on Ferguson in 1878, Lord Plunket wrote to congratulate Lady Ferguson:—

My dear Mary,—I was just on the point of writing to you when your kind invitation reached me about half an hour ago.

First let me thank you for that invitation, which I have much pleasure in accepting; next let me say what pleasure it gave me, as one of your husband's friends—and, I trust, not one of the least attached—to find that his worth has been recognised, not indeed adequately, but in such a manner as to show that it was the compulsion of real worth, and not the pretension or importunacy of a self-seeker, that prompted the recognition. It is pleasant to see true merit, notwithstanding all its modest efforts to seek the shade, tracked out, and forced to show itself before the world; and as a true and loyal wife justly proud of your husband, as you are, it must rejoice you not a little to see him honoured. Pray give him my love, and believe me yours affectionately, Plunket, Meath.

When Lady Ferguson desired to inscribe 'The Remains of St Patrick,' published in 1888, to its author's much esteemed and valued friends, his Grace accepted the dedication in these words:—

I shall esteem it a very great honour to have my name connected in any way with that of your dear husband—and you know I mean what I say, and am not using conventional terms. I have been longing and hoping for the republication of this noble translation in an accessible form, and once or twice had it on my lips to suggest the thought to you.

On the 14th of January 1895 a lecture on "The Poetry of Sir Samuel Ferguson," by the Hon. Roden Noel, was read before a Dublin audience, the Archbishop taking the chair. In introducing the reader—Miss E. H. Hickey—his Grace observed that

he was very glad of the opportunity to pay, not now for the first time, a tribute to the memory of a dear and honoured friend. As an Irishman he was proud to take part in a meeting which had for its object the recalling to them of the

memory of one who had shed so much lustre upon his native land, and a meeting which would also be the means of spreading out to them some of the literary treasures which he had bequeathed to the world at large. Sir Samuel Ferguson was a man of many gifts. He possessed one gift, which to his (his Grace's) mind was of precious value—he was a true patriot, and was an Irishman of the purest character.

The Rev. William Reeves, who at a later period became Rector of Tynan, Dean of Armagh, and Bishop of Down, Connor, and Dromore, was an early friend of Ferguson's, and their mutual regard remained unaltered throughout life. Reeves was a man of noble nature, dignified presence, and brilliant wit. He was characterised by faithfulness to duty, to friendship, and to his Church and country.

Reeves had an intimate knowledge of the district over which he bore Episcopal rule from 1886 till his death in 1892. While a curate in the diocese he had applied himself to the study of its objects of ecclesiastical and historical interest. Indefatigable in the discharge of his clerical duty, and of very active habits, a great pedestrian as well as an ardent student, he had, in his walks to visit his parishioners, increased his stores of local knowledge, and amassed the material of his first great book, published in 1847, 'The Ecclesiastical Antiquities of Down, Connor, and Dromore.' Ferguson reviewed the work in the 'University,' February 1848, and from this notice extracts are given,—for the review has, in more ways than one, an autobiographical interest. He, too, was intimately acquainted with the ancient Dalriada in which his

own boyhood had been passed, the scene of events which formed the historic basis of his earliest writings, of his epic of "Congal," on which his imagination was evidently at work twenty-four years before its publication.

In his review of Reeves's 'Ecclesiastical Antiquities' Ferguson gives expression to his own opinions of the monastic system he had studied so widely on the Continent. He betrays the repugnances which led him to abandon the project for which he had made conscientious preparation while abroad and before he left Ireland in 1845. The subject which he then relinquished was in part taken up by Reeves ten years later, when he brought out his edition of Adamnan's 'Vita S. Columbæ.' This work was pronounced by scholars "the most valuable contribution ever made to the history of the early Celtic Church." And Miss Stokes has followed the vestiges of Irish Saints on the Continent, and embodied her researches in her charming works, 'Six Months in the Apennines,' and 'Three Months in the Forests of France,' published in 1892 and 1895.

Ferguson's review of Reeves's 'Ecclesiastical Antiquities' opens with a quotation from Cicero, which may be considered as his text:—

"Historia temporum testis, lux veritatis, vita memoriæ, magistra vitæ, et nuncia antiquitatis."

History is now, even more than when Cicero pronounced this fine encomium, "the witness of times past, the light of truth, the life of memory, the guide of life, and herald of

antiquity"; for, as the world grows older, and events are become more multiplied, mankind have a larger inheritance in the actions of their predecessors, and history a greater office in charge, . . . that men may feel they are not come into the world strangers, but members of a family long planted in the land before them, owing reverence to the place and institutions of their forefathers, and by that common sentiment strengthening the social bond among one another. . . .

Among the most signal contributions which have been made to the Irish Library since the revival of historical learning among us, we assign an eminent place to this work of Mr Reeves. When it is considered how much has been accomplished in this way within the last five years, Mr Reeves's friends will perceive how highly we estimate his services. In that high estimate we do him but justice. He has earned his place with Petrie and O'Donovan. Like them, he has earned it by grave, erudite, and patriotic labour: may he long enjoy the eminence so honourably and usefully achieved! . . .

The district included within the united dioceses comprising the present counties of Down and Antrim is probably the most interesting portion of all Ireland for historical investigation. . . . It was here the influence of the bards longest survived after their dissolution at Dromceat; and here the final struggle between the old and new systems was determined, on the field of Moyra, . . . the scene of the greatest battle, whether we regard the numbers engaged, the duration of the combat, or the stake at issue, ever fought within the bounds of Ireland. For beyond question, if Congal Claen and his gentile allies had been victorious in that battle, the re-establishment of old bardic paganism would have ensued. There appears reason to believe that the fight lasted a week; and on the seventh day Congal himself is said to have been slain by an idiot youth, whom he had passed by in the battle, in scorn of his imbecility. All local memory of the event is now gone, save that one or two localities preserve names connected with it. Thus, beside the Rath of Moyra, on the east, is the hill Cairn-Albanach, the burial-place of the Scottish princes, Congal's uncles; and a pillar-stone, with a rude cross, and

some circles engraved on it, formerly marked the site of their resting-place. On the other hand, the townland of Aughnafoskar probably preserves the name of Knockanchoscar, from which Congal's druid surveyed the royal army drawn up in the plain below on the first morning of the battle. Ath Ornaidh, the ford crossed by one of the armies, is probably modernised in Thorny-ford, on the river, at some miles' distance. On the ascent to Trummery, in the direction of the woods of Killultagh, to which we are told the routed army fled, great quantities of bones of men and horses were turned up in excavating the line of the Ulster Railway. . . .

The descent of the Lagan from Moyra to Belfast is through a rich, well-timbered country, in the midst of which the river glides smoothly between demesnes and bleach-greens — an object of continual use and beauty — to where it meets the tide, at Stranmellis, an old seat of Sir Moyses Hill, before he acquired his great estates in Kilwarlin. On the right bank of the river, about midway between Lisburn and Belfast, is the Giant's Ring of Ballylessan—a circular space of about six acres, enclosed with a rampart, which shuts out the prospect of everything but the sky, having in the centre a cromlech. Whether this be a sepulchral or religious monument is hard to say. Probably there is no other instance of a sepulchral tumulus surrounded by a precinct of such great dimensions, and fenced by a rampart of such great height and solidity.

From the point where the Lagan meets the sea-water its beauty as a river ceases. But there is very great historical interest attached to the ford by which it was formerly crossed at Belfast, . . . for certain it is that the assassination of William de Burgho—the most important event in the history of the Anglo-Norman power in Ireland—took place in the ford of the Lagan, at Belfast, as he rode from Newtown of the Ards for Carrickfergus. . . . His death was the signal for a universal overthrow of the established government throughout all Connaught, and through nearly one-half of Ulster, which up to this time had been shire-land, with regular ministerial officers and an English-speaking proprietary.

In the concluding words of his review we have

Ferguson's deliberate judgment on the tendencies of early monasticism:—

Even in their least corrupt days, their establishments could have presented no very satisfactory spectacle to a dispassionate mind. . . . We own we have no sympathy with those whose reverence for antiquity leads them to desire a return to the practices of the early Irish Church—a return which we apprehend none of them will be hardy enough to allege could be achieved without monasteries and the mass. As for all their labours in antiquity, we are well pleased with them: everything new in that direction makes more apparent the reason we have to be thankful for existing institutions and practices; while, by adding new matter to our local information, it gives the country itself an increased hold on our interests and attachments. . . .

We must still remember that in the midst of this heap of human frailty they brought us the pearl of God's Word, and that, through God's grace, it is to them we chiefly owe the planting of Christianity among us. And certainly the diffusion of Christianity among us, under their teaching, was something marvellous, and not to be accounted for by anything short of a universal spiritual contagion, accompanied, on the part of its early preachers, by an appreciation of character, and a power of seizing on favourable and of avoiding unfavourable circumstances, only vouchsafed to men who are made special instruments of the great designs of God.

Reeves's letter to Ferguson on receipt of his 'Lays of the Western Gael' was written from the Vicarage, Lusk, on November 7, 1864:—

Your book took me to-day quite by surprise, for I had no idea there was such a thing on the stocks, and so pretty, and so graceful, and brought out in a style so well in keeping with the sweet measures and sentiments which give beauty and charm to the pages. I am truly happy to be possessed of the book, but more so when I read the brotherly inscription

which conveys to me the right and title of my copy. Such a volume, and so bestowed, becomes an heirloom, and a child or grandchild, some half-century hence, shall have a record that the friendship of a sweet bard of Erin, who had the genius to be a poet in spite of law, and to temper black-letter with the harmony of numbers, was a friend to, as he is the valued friend of, his admirer and well-wisher,

WM. REEVES.

Dr Reeves was soon after promoted to the living of Tynan, near Armagh, and was able to hold with it the guardianship, so congenial to him, of its Cathedral Library. His letter thanking his friend for a presentation copy of his epic of "Congal" was as follows:—

Accept my heartiest thanks for your beautiful present, enhanced so much by your affectionate inscription, and the expressions of commendation here and there, which, though undeserved, are to me most pleasing evidences of a heart full of friendship, generosity, and goodwill. Years ago I remember hearing Whitley Stokes speaking in warm terms of praise of a MS. poem on the battle of Moira which he had seen in the hands of Sam. Ferguson, but now we are no longer beholden to report concerning the work, and we can judge for ourselves. I expect the public voice will pass a vote of praise by acclamation. When I arrived here last night I found the book, and did little more than cut the leaves and skim over the pages; but when I sit down in good earnest to the book, it shall be in an hour of weariness and exhaustion, when the mind requires the sweetest and balmiest matter for its relaxation and refreshment.—Believe me to be, my dear Sam, your affectionate friend, WM. REEVES.

In the "Notes" appended to the first edition of "Congal" Ferguson thus writes of Reeves:—

Dr Reeves joins to the solidity and accuracy of Camden a charm peculiar to himself by which the driest details of

topography and chronology are made delightful. There is not a parish, scarcely a townland, in the counties of Derry, Down, and Antrim over which he has not breathed an air from the ancient humanities, which imparts picturesqueness and animation to what used to be one of the bleakest fields of investigation in all the circuit of Ireland. If we seek to discover the sources of his power, we find nothing but statements of matter of fact, expressed with lucidity and masculine brevity. It is in the order and presentation of his facts that this great master of Scottish topographical history—using the word Scottish in its old acceptation—excels all who have gone before him.

Ferguson quotes from a lecture delivered by Dr Reeves at Downpatrick, his account of the great fort or dun near that city, said to have been the abode of Keltar, son of Utechar, nephew to Conor MacNessa, King of Ulster, about the time of the Christian era. Celtchar—as the name is sometimes spelt—is described in the "Tain-bo-Cuailgne":—

> And a huge, generous, terrible warrior is the champion of that land. He has a great nose; and like an apple the ball of his eye. His hair is red, strong, half grey; and a grey-black cloak is upon him. And an iron bodkin is fastened in his cloak over his breast, that reaches from one shoulder to the other. And he has on a shaggy curiously-woven shirt. A grey shield, and a huge spear in his hand; and his death-dealing sword of seven plates of iron has thirty rivets in it, and is inlaid over its side and back.

Keltar's spear "of fifty rivets," known in mythical story as the *lann*, is described in Ferguson's poem "Conary." It has come into the possession of Duftach, one of King Conary's warriors:—

And the spear
In hands of Duftach is the famous *lann*
Of Keltar, son of Utechar, which erst
A wizard of the Tuath-dé-Danann brought
To battle at Moy Tury, and there lost:
Found after. And these motions of the spear,
And sudden sallies hard to be restrained,
Affect it, oft as blood of enemies
Is ripe for spilling; and a caldron then
Full of witch-brewage needs must be at hand,
To quench it, when the homicidal act
Is by its blade expected: quench it not;
It blazes up, even in the holder's hand,
And through the holder, and the door-planks through,
Flies forth to sate itself in massacre.

The fort of Keltar is still standing, a noble earthwork close to Downpatrick. Dr Reeves thus speaks of it in his lecture:—

The *Dun* of the ancient Irish was the fortified abode of the king or chief. It was a military term, and the structure which was so called often obtained another name in a *social* point of view—namely, that of *rath*—which denoted an *abode* or *house*, just as the regal abode at Windsor may be regarded in one point of view as a *castle*, and in another as a palace. Now you have here beside us one of the noblest remains of a primitive Irish palace which is to be found in Ireland. No one can walk round these fosses and intrenchments without being forcibly struck by their extent and boldness. If disposed to carry the imagination backwards, we may picture to the mind the stirring scenes which passed here when this great munition was in its full strength and beauty, and filled by a dense assembly of rude but powerful occupants, when its trenches were deep and filled with water, when its ramparts were lofty and palisadoed, and when chiefs with their golden collars, and bards with their tuneful harps, represented the military and social excellence of their day. . . .

The rath near Downpatrick is the largest barbaric fortress I have yet met. Sir James King called it, in 1612, "the round mount, *alias* Downeroskae"; but it is unquestionably the Dun Celtair and Arx Lethglasse of the old writers of the life of St Patrick. Downeroskae seems a name derived from its situation, and signifying "the fortress in the marsh." It was anciently and to a late period almost entirely surrounded with water, and that part of it to which there was access from dry land is considerably higher and more steep than where it was surrounded by the water. The new county gaol and the fort of Celtchar vie with each other in size: the former is a good specimen of the application of modern architectural strength to the suppression of crime, and the latter a grand example of the endeavours of mankind to secure themselves from the incursions of enemies in turbulent and lawless times, ere they had learned to build such perishable edifices as are formed of stone. The county gaol may stand for a few centuries, but the fort of Celtchar will brave as many storms as Slieve Donard. . . .

Thus amidst all the fiction and hyperbole which characterise the bardic stories of Ireland, we can, in this case, discern some vestiges of true history, and pronounce of this dun that, about the Christian era, it was the abode of a famous chief far and wide renowned for his military exploits; that he belonged to a distinguished race which left its impress upon many places in the vicinity, where their names are to this day preserved; and that many of the principal families of the adjacent districts derived their origin from the stock to which he belonged.

One word more about his date before I leave him. The native legend states that Conor MacNessa, his kinsman, the King of Ulster, when he heard of the crucifixion of Christ, exclaimed, "How sad that is; for if I were now there present, I would slay all that are around my King, now engaged in putting him to death." This story reminds one of the case of Clovis, the great King of the Franks, who, when he was a-baptising in 495, and heard the missionary, St Remigius, relate the particulars of the crucifixion, exclaimed with excite-

ment, "Had I been there with my Franks it should not have been so."

In a letter to Sir Thomas Larcom—1875—Ferguson tells him of Reeves, then Dean of Armagh, and Robinson of the Observatory, and suggests a meeting at Armagh for this group of friends:—

Reeves testified the most affectionate interest in your health and pursuits, and caught eagerly at an expression of my wish that we might succeed in inducing you to revisit us, and to see the old man eloquent of Armagh once more while he is still left among us. Between the Deanery House and the Observatory (even supposing the *coarb* of Patrick not to open the Palace to some of us) there would be room for a large party, and I cannot but think that the remembrance of such a reunion would leave an agreeable souvenir in your memory hereafter.

Let me wish you and Lady Larcom every happiness that the closing year brings with it in retrospect and in prospect, and assure you of the unbroken esteem and regard with which I remain, as always since I first had the good fortune to know you, yours most faithfully, SAML. FERGUSON.

When Ferguson was elected President of the Royal Irish Academy in 1881, Dean Reeves wrote to Lady Ferguson, and subsequently to her husband:—

MY DEAR MARY,—I received your card of invitation for to-morrow, but, alas! I cannot go. Were it not for to-night's address, to which I have been long looking forward, I would be off for Armagh to-day. But go I must to-morrow to my home, as there is much in the ecclesiastical way to look after there before the end of this week.

I shall be so happy to hear my dear old friend this evening that I shall count it a memorable occasion in honour of St Andrew, though his patronage belongs to Scotia junior. How-

ever, as the chief observance by the Academy is fixed for the eve of St Patrick's festival, Scotia major receives the greater respect. There will be a large attendance, and I have no doubt an attentive and appreciative audience.—Believe me, your affectionate old friend, WM. REEVES.

To Sir Samuel Ferguson Dean Reeves wrote from Tynan:—

I am happy to think that your meeting of the Academy on last Thursday sennight evening was so successful, and that your address so fully sustained the reputation of the speaker. It had only one weak point, and that was the affectionate but too commendatory estimate of the merits of an individual who had the happiness to be among your admiring hearers.

The "affectionate estimate" to which Dean Reeves refers as the "one weak point" in his friend's address was the following allusion to Reeves's scholarship made by Sir Samuel Ferguson:—

After the time of Dr Todd, indeed, the work of carrying forward a purely literary and scholastic exploration of Irish historical and antiquarian sources devolved mainly on one man, who has been to us at once our Camden and our Ussher—it is no disparagement to either great name to make the application. The Academy will readily understand that I speak of the Very Rev. Dr William Reeves. In his contributions to Irish learning in our 'Transactions' we have, laid up for the delight and instruction of scholars, an immense store of information, solid, accurate, scrupulously vouched, all conveyed with a grace and engaging directness unsurpassed by any other cultivator of those fields of knowledge here or elsewhere.

In a letter dated December 1885 the Dean tells of the death of Primate M. G. Beresford. It was hoped

by Reeves's many friends that he would be called "to bear the burthen of the Primacy." It was otherwise determined, and Reeves was nominated to be Bishop of the United Dioceses of Down, Connor, and Dromore. Over these he ruled till his death in January 1892. Meantime, as Dean of Armagh, Reeves wrote to Ferguson:—

MY DEAR GOOD FRIEND,—I received by post your valuable Christmas gift, being the version of the Patrician Documents with your observations thereon.

The Fasciculus is specially prized by me on account of the loving superscription, which records the donor's feelings towards the recipient. I would have acknowledged the kindness before this, but for the Primate's illness, which caused the suspension of my customary habits and pursuits. This morning at a quarter-past ten he closed a long life of usefulness and distinction, and one of much enjoyment by reason of manifold blessings in person and family, till old age at length asserted its rights, imposing many maladies, and at last death proved the gentle visitor to undo the galling fetters of mortality. And now, past pain, his body awaits the funeral solemnities of Thursday next, when its final excursion will be from the Palace to the Cathedral, there to rest with his noble predecessors' remains.—Give my love to Mary, and believe me to remain your loving friend,

WM. REEVES.

The Bishop of Down and Connor departed this life, after a very brief illness, on the 12th of January 1892. It was said of him by the Dean of St Patrick's at the funeral service in the National Cathedral:—

Ireland has lost a son who was more familiar with the antiquities of her race than almost any other man in the kingdom. The Church of Ireland has lost one who was a

faithful son to her in every position in which he was placed, from the lowest to the highest; and many and many a one, both here and elsewhere, have lost a friend whose memory will remain long fresh in their hearts.

At the opening of the General Synod the Archbishop of Dublin, Lord Plunket, thus alluded to the deceased Bishop:—

In him we have lost a ripe scholar, who, by his special knowledge of antiquarian lore, and more particularly in its bearing on the history of our own Church, had won for himself a name throughout the length and breadth of the literary world; a genial companion, who, by the charm of his conversation, flowing forth from a well-stored mind, and by his self-forgetful courtesy, was a welcome friend and guest in any social circle. Above all, we have lost one who, by his loyal and affectionate friendship, has left a blank of imperishable memory in many a mourner's heart.

CHAPTER XXI.

1857–1886.

FRIENDSHIPS WITH MEN OF SCIENCE.

"How charming is divine philosophy!
Not harsh and crabbed, as dull fools suppose,
But musical as is Apollo's lute,
And a perpetual feast of nectared sweets,
Where no crude surfeit reigns."

—MILTON.

AMONG the friendships which enriched and made happy the lives of Ferguson and his wife was that which subsisted between them and General and Mrs Chesney. Since his retirement from active service this distinguished officer — who was Commander in 1834-36 of the Euphrates Expedition — resided at Packolet, a house which he had built on his property in the county of Down. It was a lovely spot in the "Kingdom of Mourne"—that triangular district bounded on the east by the Irish Sea, on the south by Carlingford Bay, and of which the Mourne Mountains formed the base. This picturesque range stretches diagonally across the southern part of Down, from Newcastle on

the north-east to Rosstrevor on the south-west. Although they hardly attain the height of 3000 feet, yet when viewed from the district of Mourne the sea-level secures to them their utmost altitude. Bingian, the most rugged and picturesque, holds a midway position, looking down on Kilkeel, the little town of the district; and Slieve Donard, more lofty but less picturesque in outline, terminates the range at Newcastle. These mountains, as viewed from Packolet, were objects of ever-varying beauty. The aerial tints, light and shadow on their rocky summits, golden furze and purple heather midway, and at their base well-cropped farms, extending to the blue margin of the sea, —these were at all seasons of the year, and all hours of the day, delightful objects for the eye to gaze on.

Packolet had that indescribable air of refinement and elegance — books, pictures, china, flowers, and ladies' work of all kinds—which indicates the cherished home of travelled and cultured inmates. It was a truly hospitable house. The guests, numerous and varied, inhaled an atmosphere which made them happy and at their ease. While experiencing the kindest attentions from host and hostess, they were without the unpleasing consciousness of interfering with ordinary family routine, and were free from all sense of restraint. Such an atmosphere can be created only by a woman; and Mrs Chesney,—

"A perfect woman, nobly planned,"—

was ably seconded by her step-daughter, the only child

of General Chesney's first marriage. A younger daughter and four little boys, children of the lady above named, completed the household.

The General's life-history — a romantic one — has been told by his wife and eldest daughter in their joint biography of 'General Francis Rawdon Chesney, Colonel Commandant Royal Artillery, D.C.L., F.R.S., F.R.G.S., &c., 1885.' General Chesney died, full of years and honours, on the 30th of January 1872. This interesting volume is dedicated "To the two surviving officers of the Euphrates Expedition, Admiral Charlewood and Mr W. F. Ainsworth, and to the zealous advocate of the Euphrates Route to India, Sir William Andrew, C.I.E."

The motto which Jacques Cœur, banker to King Charles VII. of France, carved on the balustrades of his beautiful château at Bourges, was to the effect that nothing was impossible to the valiant—"À VAILLANS [CŒURS] RIEN IMPOSSIBLE." Chesney, too, held that nothing was impossible to a strong will; and his life, both in public and in private, was a commentary on that text.

Chesney had followed the campaigns of the Great Napoleon, and walked over all his battle-fields. He had visited the East, and was the author of a history of the Russo-Turkish Campaigns of 1828-29. He also went to Egypt, sailed down the Nile, surveyed the Isthmus of Suez and the outlets of Lake Menzaleh. It was the information thus acquired by Chesney that convinced the Count Ferdinand de Lesseps of the

feasibility of the Suez Canal; and in after-years, when the Canal was an accomplished fact, the Frenchman himself pronounced Chesney the "Father" of the project.

De Lesseps was most favourably circumstanced for obtaining from the Khedive the indispensable concession of land required for his great undertaking. His father had been French Consul in Egypt when Napoleon was compelled by Nelson's victory of the Nile to evacuate that country. Napoleon confided to the Consul the facts of his position. "I must leave; can you help me to find a strong man, able to rule? He must be Mohammedan in creed, and competent to preserve order here when I depart." De Lesseps named Mohammed Ali. "He is an illiterate soldier of fortune," he told the Emperor; "but he has a clear head, a strong hand, and an inflexible will." Napoleon appointed him to the position he afterwards filled so ably. Mohammed Ali educated himself, and proved to be a born ruler of men. He was aware that he owed his first step to power to the Consul of France. Their children were playfellows. Said, who was Khedive at the time that Count Ferdinand de Lesseps projected the Suez Canal, readily granted his early friend the concessions he required, and—as is well known—De Lesseps successfully accomplished that great undertaking.

Explorations in Palestine and Syria were made in 1830, and in 1831-32 Chesney descended the Euphrates on a raft from Anah—once a royal residence of Par-

thian monarchs. The raft was supported on inflated sheepskins. On this rude structure he managed, without attracting undue notice, to take soundings of the river and sketches of the scenery on its banks. On his return to England these excited so much interest that a second exploration was determined on, and Chesney was appointed to its command. Two small steamers were prepared and sent to Syria in sections. These were landed in the Bay of Antioch, dragged across Syria, and put together and launched on the Euphrates. 'The Personal Narrative of the Euphrates Expedition' gives interesting details of these arduous operations:—

> The second and greater expedition was conducted with a devoted company of English officers, with ample materials and engineering apparatus; but it had its own difficulties. The work of transporting the boilers and heavy sections of steamers from the Mediterranean to the head of the Euphrates was a herculean labour, but it only brought out the sterling quality of Chesney's character. Tossing on his bed, in the crisis of brain-fever, the only sound that could soothe him to sleep was the tapping of the hammers on the boiler rivets. At death's-door, he could not rest until the ring of metal proved to his wandering mind that work was being pushed vigorously on.

Mr (afterwards Admiral) Charlewood had the happiness in later years to see his son, Mr Edward Charlewood, united in marriage to Everilda, the younger daughter of his friend and commanding officer on the Euphrates Expedition. In Admiral Charlewood's concluding words he bears record, "that arduous as this service was, I have always looked back upon it as one

of the happiest periods of my life. We all worked with goodwill, and although we suffered greatly from illness and other causes, yet the great charm was, that our chief both trusted and appreciated us. Never was a man so well adapted for an expedition of this nature, principally from what I have already mentioned, and also from his great tact in putting the right man in the right place. In addition to this, I felt a great pleasure in the wild desert life." Admiral Charlewood died in 1894.

The results of the Euphrates Expedition were these: Chesney "had proved the Euphrates to be navigable; he had demonstrated that it was the shortest route to India; he had shown that a very extensive commerce existed along its banks, which might with very slight encouragement be rendered exceedingly valuable; while he had also proved that with proper management there was nothing to be feared from the Arab tribes."

Chesney's third and fourth journeys to the East "represent little danger or physical difficulty; but it is not often that a man of seventy-three will leave his well-earned repose to set off pell-mell for Constantinople to obtain from the Porte concessions for a railway route which none but he can win. Indomitable energy and a resolute belief in the policy of never giving up were among General Chesney's characteristics, and he possessed them as completely at eighty-two as he did when he first set out to find his way to the great river forty years before."

Although Chesney had retired from the active practice of his profession, his interest in it continued

unabated. He published in 1850 his great work, the 'History of the Euphrates Expedition.' In this laborious task he had the aid of his third wife, Louisa, youngest daughter of his old and faithful friends, Mr and Mrs Fletcher of London. To her he had been united in marriage in 1848. She—who still survives him—was a "willing assistant." Highly educated, devoted, and persevering, she shrank from no labour which was serviceable to her husband. Together they "wrote, and copied, and sought out and verified authorities day after day, and month after month." The "great book" was followed by a work on the 'Past and Present State of Firearms.' This Ferguson reviewed in the 'University,' April 1852. In the previous January he had thus written to his friend on the introduction of projectiles into warfare:—

I would propose to connect the rockets like chain-shot; but as a chain would drag and catch on intervening objects, I would employ a chain of carriages—country carts, for example—heavy enough to keep along the surface, and the wheels of which would cause them to bound over obstacles. Invisible projectiles are the least regarded; visible ones pursuing one straight line are the next more formidable; but the most formidable of all, I suppose, would be such as would be visible in their approach, and would occupy an extended front. I have often speculated on attaching a congreve to a common outside jaunting-car back foremost, and setting it off down a street loaded with a bag of gunpowder or gun-cotton. The difficulty was that the least inequality of surface would run the car out of the straight line and bring it up against some lateral obstruction. Two cars attached by a chain would be less likely to run both to the same side, and the varying directions of two or twenty cars so connected would mutually correct one

another and preserve the uniformity of front. If I am right in my idea that a line of waggons of, say, 100 yards in length could be propelled across the country by this means with the rapidity of a charge of cavalry, it is plain that no formation could be depended on, and that cavalry following in the track of such an *avant-courier* would act destructively. My idea, as I have said, would be to place the carriages back foremost, leaving the shafts to trail on the surface, where they would assist in some measure in keeping the direction constant. I would attach the rockets under the bodies of the carts, giving these at either extremity of the line a turn outwards so as to keep the line stretched. If the thing be practicable for 100 yards, it would be practicable for the length of the position at Waterloo. Revolve the idea in your mind, and tell me if it be plausible enough to warrant a suggestion to people at Woolwich to try it experimentally. . . .

I don't know if you are acquainted with Urquhart, the member for Stafford. He is just now on a visit with Mr Ross, at Rosstrevor. If you should meet him you will find him very full of information on Eastern affairs. He and Mr Ross spent an evening with us when he was in town, and he seemed interested to know of your being in the neighbourhood he was about to visit.

I am ashamed to be unable to give Mrs Chesney the promised particulars about Greencastle, having been constantly occupied in business that prevents me looking into the Records, from which alone I apprehend anything certain respecting it can be derived. There's nothing in the common topographies beyond a loose statement that it was built by the De Burghos. If so, it dates from before the middle of the fourteenth century.

Another letter from Ferguson to Chesney, though of a later date—1860—shows how keenly interested he was in military and scientific matters, and that his many-sided mind embraced questions outside the spheres of Law and Literature:—

PACKOLET, *7th Oct.* 1860.

MY DEAR CHESNEY,—Being at Newry on railway business, I have been unable to resist the attraction of seeing my old friends here; and although I miss you, I find with Mrs Chesney so kind a welcome that I have devoted myself to the pleasure of a mountain excursion, almost as frankly as if the head of the hospitable household were here in person.

Being on the spot recalls to my mind some of the subjects on which I would like to converse with you if you were here. I see in the last number of the 'Cornhill Magazine' a paper on the national defences, in which I find one of my old ideas (as to the employment of a turn-table for the gun under a hemisphere of iron) has occurred to another, just as I lately found that my notion of a molten-metal shell had taken practical shape in the hands of an independent speculator.

Finding these details worth something, I conceive it possible that the general theory of which they formed parts may have a feasible basis. I will therefore put down the outline of what I have thought on the subject. First as regards the turn-table. I conceived that it should carry several guns, each of which, after being discharged through the fixed embrasure, should be loaded during its transit round the rest of the circle, so as to bring it to the embrasure ready for a renewed discharge. I contemplated the employment of a series of turn-tables in a circular bastion, each occupying one casemated storey, and commanding its own segment of the exterior.

The necessity of a ready supply of fresh guns suggested the use of a railroad round the rampart having points communicating with a central *dépôt*. It occurred to me that the protection afforded by a parapet broken into embrasures was very imperfect, and that either an elevating carriage might be devised, by which the gun (loaded under cover of a continuous parapet) could be raised *quasi en barbette* at the moment of firing; or that the recoil of the gun might be spent on a curved tramway which would bring it out of the open of the embrasure, and under cover of the parapet during the process of loading; or that the same object might be achieved by

working the gun on a lateral traversing platform which should be mounted on a tramway parallel to the parapet. But what seems to me the most practicable idea, now that guns are made so light, is that of the elevating carriage, by which you show only for the moment of firing over any point of the curtain, and so keep out of the fire of fixed batteries—at least in so far as direct fire is concerned.

But the application of the turn-table from which I would expect the principal advantages would be in floating circular batteries, moved and movable, through all parts of the wet ditch of a place. These should be iron-plated, beehive-covered tuns propelled by an endless chain laid in the bottom of the ditch, as has lately been done with canal boats.

The cover is the same here from indirect as from direct fire, and by a shift of position of a few yards the deviation of a fixed battery could be continually evaded. But the tun should have a motion round its own axis so as to bring its one or two fixed port-holes in the proposed line of fire, along which the revolution of the curtained turn-table would throw a continuous discharge. Conceive now the ditch extended by a canal prolonging each face into the field, say, a mile or any other distance of which the surface would allow. Your fortress is an island in a sea occupied by floating batteries without the disturbance of waves or the dangers of navigation.

I have spoken to you of the utilising of railway lines for purposes of defence. Could the existing lines of canal and of the Thames and Medway be made bases of auxiliary floating martello-towers? As regards railways, what has occurred to me is that each line should form a military road behind a succession of posts and positions prepared for the reception of troops and armament. I think it would be a great waste to keep up armed forts in all directions even round London. But the earthworks and magazines of intrenched positions might be made ready for the reception of men and guns whenever occasion should demand, and the lines of railway are now so close that there are few eligible positions to which a short tram could not be laid from some

adjoining line, by which men and material might at once be transported to works ready for their reception.

Finally, it strikes me that lines of light tram-road radiating from a front of fortification would carry loads of explosive substances, which might be propelled by rocket-power as destructively above ground as the galleries of mines below the surface. Especially on a leading highroad a line of tram just strong enough to prevent a waggon laden with live shells from swerving would enable a party disputing the passage to send such a precursor to the action of cavalry as would, I think, greatly impede an enemy.

You must ascribe to the air of the place this long, and, I fear, somewhat presumptuous disquisition, all the ideas in which have probably been already present in your own mind; but I should like, if I could, to have a hand in the defence of national freedom, which I fear would not long survive a successful French invasion.—Ever, dear Chesney, truly yours,

SAMUEL FERGUSON.

General Chesney made a point of attending the levées of the Lord Lieutenant in Dublin, and enjoyed with his wife and daughter the social amusements of the Drawing-Room and other Viceregal hospitalities. On such occasions "The Ferguson Arms" gladly received them. In spring and summer it was a great refreshment to the Fergusons to be the guests of General and Mrs Chesney at Packolet. The friendship, thus strengthened by frequent intercourse, was cemented by the sojourn of the Fergusons in the summer of 1855 at the seaside cottage of Derryogue, in the neighbourhood of their friends in Mourne. Many joint expeditions among the mountains familiarised the poet with the scenery he afterwards described in "Congal." That very happy summer was often

recalled to memory. In later years—in a letter to his wife, at the time on a visit at Packolet—Ferguson thus alludes to the scenes amid which she was sojourning:—

I am sure the scenes about Packolet must be most lovely just now. Go up the back-road and out on the high ground where old Mrs Close used to live, and look across at the range of mountains, and think of me. Or, I almost equally delight in the prospect looking over past Thornhill from Kilkeel road. This recalls Derryogue. The scene will always be dear to me. I never saw the foliage so beautiful as it is this year. Even George's Street trees are equalled if not surpassed by those of the Deanery.

In the Biography Mrs Chesney describes an antiquarian tour made with the Fergusons:—

General Chesney and his wife made what was perhaps the most enjoyable excursion they had yet undertaken. They joined their friends Sir Samuel and Lady Ferguson at Drogheda; and in their company explored the Fort of Dowth, New Grange, Slane, Trim, and finally Tara. To any one who cared for Irish archæology, these sites must be replete with interest; but to have been permitted to visit these sacred spots of Ireland's early greatness in the society of the President of the Royal Irish Academy and his gifted wife, was a happiness of no common order. From their rich stores of learning and of poetry arose the kings and heroes of the past; and the mounds and galleries and ancient ruins, where their great deeds had chronicled their names, became repeopled for the time. Kells, with its five crosses, and Rath-Keltar, the great Mound of Downpatrick, were also visited; and a little later, whilst on a visit to Dr and Mrs Robinson at the Observatory, Armagh, Emania, and Creve Roe were explored.

Their mutual friend Mr De Vismes Kane was to have

joined the tourists at Drogheda, but through some mistake failed to appear. Lady Ferguson's letter to him tells of their proceedings, and of the pleasures he had missed:—

We were indeed greatly disappointed that you did not join us on Easter Monday at Drogheda. We were at the station at the time appointed with a long car and pair of horses. General and Mrs Chesney duly arrived from the north, but the Dublin train came up, and no sign of you! My husband sat on the platform for an hour and a half till the following train came in, thinking you had missed the first and would come on by the next train. Meantime I drove our friends round Drogheda, and showed them many objects of interest in the immediate neighbourhood. When the second train from Dublin came up without you, we set off for New Grange, Dowth, and Knowth, and thoroughly explored those ancient monuments. General Chesney, who has seen the Pyramids, and indeed all the wonders of the world from China to our Western isle, was amazed with New Grange. We dined there, on its summit, amid blossoming furze, blackthorn, primroses, and violets. Then we continued our journey by the Boyne to Slane, Navan, Bective, and ultimately to Trim. Here we slept, and in the morning explored its medieval antiquities: the noble castle of King John's time, the "Yellow Steeple," erected by Richard Duke of York, father to two of our Plantagenet Kings; the old manor-house of the Talbots, still occupied, built by the Sir John Talbot of Shakespeare's "King Henry VI." We dined on Tara Hill, on the site of the old banqueting-hall, even now distinctly traceable, as is also Cormac's House, the mound of the Hostages, Conor Mac-Nessa's Rath; that of Cuchullin, and King Leary, who is buried, according to tradition, in its outer earthenwork standing erect with his face "towards the hated Lagenian race." Add to this Kells with its Round Tower, three sculptured crosses and house—so called—of St Columba, various old churches and castles, the Rath of Teltown and that of Conall

Criffan,—all these, with the addition of most lovely weather and delightful society, and you will see what you have lost!

However, we must hope you have yet in store a visit to Tara, Teltown, New Grange, Trim, and Kells. And now behold us here in the wilds of Clare, drinking the mineral waters of Lisdoonvarna, on the borders of that territory of Thomond called "Burrin," where Ireton declared there was not "water enough to drown a man, wood enough to hang him, or earth enough to bury him." It is indeed the "smooth-stoned slippery Burrin"; limestone rocks covering the surface; yet around them the tenderest herbage, feeding sheep and cattle; but very little vestige of man, and no trees. We hear the Atlantic roar, and are within a few miles of the cliffs of Moher. These are grand and impressive: a sheer precipice of 600 feet; and beneath the wide expanse of waters. From the cliff we gaze on our beloved Aran, lying like a gem on the breast of ocean. The immediate neighbourhood of this place is not attractive. But the air is delicious, the weather glorious, the country full of duns and forts and cashels, and old churches and castles of the O'Briens, and so we have much to interest us; and if the waters benefit my dear husband's health, we shall retain some grateful impressions of the place. At all events it is quiet; and after the rush of dissipation we have lately had in Dublin, this is no small attraction.

In the spring of 1857 Ferguson wrote to Professor Sedgwick of Cambridge, asking him to be his guest during the meeting of the British Association to be held in the summer of that year in Dublin. The great geologist had in her girlhood taken Mrs Ferguson, then Mary Guinness, another young friend, and his beloved niece, Isabella Sedgwick, on a tour to the English Lakes. They had been very happy under his guidance. He brought them to Rydal Mount, and inspired them with enthusiasm for Wordsworth's poetry. In

his reply to Ferguson he alludes to this delightful excursion :—

CAMBRIDGE, *April* 3, 1857.

I received your very kind letter last night, enclosed in the same envelope with one from Dent. . . .

I am very grateful to you, and tell Mrs Ferguson that I am doubly grateful to her, for your kind letter. I do remember with renewed joy the charming excursion I had to the Lake mountains with a youthful party, in which were two who then passed by the names of Mary Guinness and Kate Whelan. Since then we are all changed, but not in hearts I hope. They have changed their names, and concentrated their love in their own homes; but Christian love is most expansive, and I trust that they have a corner of their hearts left for an old friend, who loved them both while they were joyful and happy under his guidance.

Since I shook hands with Miss Guinness I am sadly changed, and you may tell Mrs Ferguson that she has *gained* a loss by not having me at her house; for I am now as deaf as a post on one side of my head—my sight is bad in my left eye, and my right eye has long struck work—all my best teeth have dropped out of my jaws, and all my beauty (ask your better half if it was not remarkable when we were together at Paradise in Great Langdale, when we saw Adam and Eve) has vanished away. And what is left behind to inherit my old fame? A crusty, gouty, hypochondriacal man, who is in his seventy-third year, who cannot sleep when he is in bed, and who when up is either as cross as a wasp or as torpid as a half-frozen toad. This is my present picture; therefore pray tell Mrs Ferguson to be thankful that she has escaped from such a frightful visitation. Still I have a warm heart left, and I feel like myself again when a friend comes to see me. If under your guidance she should ever visit Cambridge, tell her that I shall rejoice to show her my noble collection of antediluvian monsters, and make them roar lustily for her amusement, and that when she is tired of looking at my dead bones, I will show her what we can turn out with our kitchen apparatus. I must conclude, as I have another letter I ought

to write before our morning chapel at 7 A.M. I have no merit in early rising. I leave bed very, very early, because bed becomes to me a place of torment rather than of rest. Pray forgive this private history, which is in truth chiefly addressed to my old companion to Great Langdale and the modern Paradise.—I am, my dear sir, truly and gratefully yours,

A. SEDGWICK.

Some years later, on their return from the Continent, the Fergusons, finding themselves in London with a day or two at their disposal, telegraphed to their Cambridge friends Professor and Mrs Adams, and offered to visit them on their way to Ireland. On receiving a cordial response they started at once for Cambridge, and reached the Observatory in time for dinner. Mrs Adams had sent to inform Professor Sedgwick, and before the repast was ended the dear old man was observed slowly approaching, leaning on the arm of his servant. All left the table and met him as he reached the house. He greeted his old friend with much affection, and asked her and her husband and Professor and Mrs Adams to dine with him on the following day. On finding that the Fergusons had on that night to cross the Channel, he named an early hour, and before dinner took them over the museum, of which he was proud. After dinner he withdrew his old companion at the Lakes to show her his "treasures." He unlocked a box which contained books presented by the Queen and Prince Albert with their autographs; letters from distinguished people; and beneath all a large miniature case, which he opened. It contained the portrait of a lady dressed in the fashion then half

a century old. When he placed it in Mrs Ferguson's hands he looked wistfully as if soliciting her to question him; but she could not bring herself to touch on what was doubtless a life's romance. He replaced the portrait with a sigh, and without further confidences they rejoined the rest of the party.

Professor John Couch Adams, astronomer and mathematician, had, as a young man, as early as September 1845, indicated the place in the heavens where a new planet should be found. In the words of Sedgwick, "Adams had tied a noose tightly about its neck." Sedgwick told in the Combination-Room of Trinity College how the astronomer "had worked out by calculation the position occupied in the heavens by the planet Neptune, and his indignation that the credit of being the first to make so remarkable a discovery had been refused to the young Cambridge mathematician."

The following graphic account is given by Professor M'Coy of Dublin, who devoted four years to the arrangement of British and Foreign fossils in the Cambridge Museum. The scene is the Combination-Room, Trinity College, Cambridge:—

The first night was a memorable one. There was a large party in the Combination-Room at Trinity to see the new year in; and at it were not only the most distinguished men of Cambridge, but many strangers who had come down for the occasion. Adams was present, and the question of the independent discovery of the planet by him and Le Verrier, and which of them should have the merit of priority, was taken up in a most interesting manner by Professor Sedg-

wick, who told the tale to the whole listening table with fuller knowledge of the facts than any one else had, from his intimacy with the Astronomer Royal as well as with Adams.

He related how Adams, as soon as he had taken his B.A. degree, worked the matter fully out to his own perfect satisfaction, and brought to the Greenwich Observatory a statement of the result obtained for the place of the planet, with a request that the observers would direct their instruments to the indicated spot, expressing his conviction that the new body would be found there. With thrilling words Sedgwick touched off the neglect with which young men of genius might have their labours slighted, and deplored the loss to the University, to England, and to their friend, of the glory of this most brilliant achievement. Because nobody at the Observatory knew or cared anything about Mr Adams, nobody looked where he asked to have a scrutiny made, and his paper was put in a pigeon-hole, neglected and forgotten, until Le Verrier made a similar request, with the result that immediate attention was paid to him. (The planet itself was at length observed, first at Berlin and then elsewhere, and by universal acclaim the discovery was set down to Le Verrier.) Then Adams and his old communication were remembered, and it was found that so long before he had pointed more precisely (there were only a few minutes, I think, between their places) to the proper spot on the heavens for the search, and had worked out the whole of the calculations with perfect accuracy, completeness, and elegance. To Adams's great discomfort Sedgwick told how his modesty prevented his troubling the Astronomer Royal or any of the officials further in the matter, and how Prince Albert and the Queen felt so strongly on the subject that Adams was asked to accept knighthood at the Public Commencement in 1847, in proof of their recognition of his wonderful work; and with regret that he would accept no such recognition the story ended. A dead silence fell upon the company. No one felt inclined to break the spell by uttering a word, and Sedgwick, closing his eyes and leaning back in meditative silence, enlisted the sorrowful sympathy of all.

Suddenly he started up with fiery energy, and raising his arm with a fierce gesture, startled us all by exclaiming, "*Curse their narcotic souls!*" What was to have come after this we never heard, as a burst of laughter with which this beginning was received seemed to awaken him as from a dream. He looked round to see what was the matter, and as he did so, the boyish, good-natured, beaming expression came back—with his favourite gesture of rubbing his hand over his face and eyes, and a hearty laugh at himself—and thus my first experience of his powers of speech ended.

Professor Sedgwick, "a master among philosophers, the friend of princes, the delight of little ones," died in January 1873, at the age of eighty-eight. Of him it is recorded that he "extended the frontiers of Science, and was fired with a right royal love of Truth." But no less characteristic of Adam Sedgwick was his attachment to his native vale. Dent is a Yorkshire dale conterminous with Westmoreland. In its church three generations — his father, brother, and nephew — had ministered in spiritual things to the dalesmen, and in the Parsonage the Professor first saw the light. In a letter to a correspondent he describes the valley, always the home of his affections:—

I wish I could, for a minute or two, transport you to this place. Not so much that you might look at my rugged old face, as that you might gladden your eyes by gazing over the sweet scenery of this rich pastoral valley. The home scenery is delicious, and glowing at this moment (6.30 A.M.) with the richest light of heaven; and from the door of this old home of my childhood I can look down the valley, and see, blue in the distance, the crests of the Lake mountains, which rear their heads near the top of Windermere. All around me is

endeared by the sweet remembrances of early life; . . . indeed, when I return to Dent I feel again as if I were in my true home, and I quite naturally talk and think of the joys of boyhood, and begin "to babble of green fields."

For more than threescore years Cambridge has been my honoured resting-place, and here God has given me a life-long task amidst a succession of intellectual friends. For Trinity College, ever since I passed under its great portal for the first time in the autumn of 1804, I have felt a deep and grateful sentiment of filial regard. But, spite of a strong and enduring regard for the University and the College, whenever I have revisited the hills and dales of my native country, and heard the cheerful greetings of my old friends and countrymen, I have felt a new swell of emotion, and said to myself, "Here is the land of my birth; this was the home of my boyhood, and is still the home of my heart."

For Professor and Mrs Adams the Fergusons had a warm and sincere regard. In conjunction with Sir George Gabriel Stokes — sometime President of the Royal Society, and subsequently M.P. for Cambridge, son-in-law to Dr Romney Robinson, and a relative of Dr William Stokes — Ferguson was Mrs Adams's trustee. Much of the correspondence necessarily dealt with business matters, but the friends from time to time exchanged mutual hospitalities. The wife of another Cambridge Professor, Mrs Miller, had etched in pen and ink beautiful and elaborate studies of Alpine scenery, which were greatly admired by Ferguson. His kind friends at the Observatory had presented him with some of these, reproduced by photography. His admiration of them is alluded to in the following letters:—

My dear Professor Adams,—Can you help me to the

reading of the inscriptions which I enclose? It would be a gratification to one whom I would like to gratify; so I know, if it can be done, it will be a pleasure to you also.

I thank God I am very much stronger in all points than when I last saw you and Mrs Adams; will you give her my own and my wife's affectionate remembrances? . . .

At the Academy we have got some accession to our scientific forces. I wish I could learn Professor Miller's judgment on the utility of using the microscope in determining the composition of rock. Can an observer see the bounding lines of the crystals so as to discriminate and identify them? It is alleged not, because, it is said, unless your crystal is cut in its proper place, you cannot from its section determine its class; but I fancy the crystal in a slice of stone would stand high enough out of its bedding to show its facets, unless on a polished surface. At all events the subject brings our friend to my mind with very agreeable recollections, extending to Mrs Miller, whom I admire in her work every time I take up your delightful book of photographs. Tell her, when you see her, I would rather range the Alps in her company than in that of any other illustrator I ever saw. Believe me (with some yearnings for the banks of the Cam, to be gratified some day, *D.V.*), yours very faithfully, SAMUEL FERGUSON.

To this Mrs Adams replied from Bath:—

I am really delighted you liked the photographs so much. Your letter followed us here, and as Professor Adams could throw no light on the questions you wanted answered, I wrote to ask them of that perfect encyclopedia—Professor Miller, who sends the enclosed to be forwarded to you.

Mrs Miller writes in very great pleasure at your admiration of her drawings and the photographs.

Please tell Mrs Ferguson, with my dear love, that Professor Adams is so pleased with the 'Christian Examiner' she so kindly sent us that he means to send for the publication to be forwarded regularly to us.

Ferguson wrote for information touching the procession of the equinox, too technical to be entered on here.

The inquiries were made of Dr Robinson through his wife:—

I have a question in astronomy which I find great difficulty in getting a clear answer to. . . . Could you, without troubling Dr Robinson himself, help me to something definite? . . .

What a bore for you, my dear friend, who love astronomy only as impersonated in the Astronomer, to be pestered with this cobbler, who has left his last on his lapstone and gone gadding among the signs of the zodiac. Well, tell me plainly, the question is, . . . and I'll put it to my worthy friend Adams; but you are nearer, and it seems more natural; and besides, now that the sun shines, and the leaves put themselves forth, and the east wind mitigates its temper, my heart turns to my older companions.

Tell dear Mrs Butler I shall send her a copy of "Deirdré," a one-act drama, one of these days. And now farewell, and may the sun, whether he be in Pisces or Aquarius or elsewhere, look on no one in his daily courses more contented and peaceful.—Ever yours affectionately,

SAML. FERGUSON.

Sir Robert S. Ball, known to Ferguson from his youth, succeeded Professor Adams in the Cambridge Observatory. He had been previously Astronomer Royal at Dunsink, the Observatory in connection with Trinity College, Dublin—made classic ground by the genius of Sir W. R. Hamilton. Sir R. S. Ball has done much by his writings and lectures to make astronomy interesting and intelligible to the non-scientific mind. His brother Dr Valentine Ball—recently deceased,—June 1895,—was Director of the

National Museum of Dublin. Dr Charles Ball, a younger brother, is an eminent medical man in the Irish capital. Their father, a distinguished naturalist, had died in the prime of manhood from the rupture of a blood-vessel when sounding in the Museum of the Royal Irish Academy one of the bronze trumpets preserved in the collection. These, with their marvellous rivetings, have come down to us from prehistoric times, but require powerful lungs to make them audible.

Sir Robert and Lady Kane, both eminent in science, were dear and intimate friends of Ferguson and his wife. Their marriage had been a romantic one. The lady was an orphan brought up in the retirement of country life by maiden aunts. Apart from the companionship of young people of her own age, Miss Baily devoted herself, among other studies, to that of Botany, and her work—still the best authority on Irish botany—was printed at the University Press at the same time that Kane's 'Industrial Resources of Ireland' was passing through the press. The printers by a blunder sent each writer's proof to the other. The lady re-posted the one sent to her; but the gentleman, much impressed by the excellence of the work mis-sent to him, called at the printers', obtained Miss Baily's name and address, and said that he would remedy their blunder himself by returning her proofs in person. The acquaintance thus commenced resulted in a congenial and happy marriage. Sir Robert Kane became President of Cork College, and head of the

College of Science in Dublin. He was also the immediate predecessor of Ferguson as President of the Royal Irish Academy.

Educated in an atmosphere of science and literature —for Lady Kane was also a good Greek scholar—it is not surprising that the children of Sir Robert and Lady Kane are distinguished in their several spheres. Judge Kane, already mentioned as the friend of Winterbotham, is a man of large attainment in other knowledge as well as in that of Law. He was in Italy when he heard of Ferguson's Knighthood, and wrote thus to Lady Ferguson of one whom he had known intimately from childhood:—

> I send you and Sir Samuel my hearty congratulations and those of my wife on your new title, or rather I should congratulate the Order of Knighthood on having such an accession of merit to its ranks as will indeed do it honour. . . . As long as I can recollect I have been hearing of the name of Sam Ferguson as one deserving such love and honour that a title could not add anything to it.

His next brother, Captain Henry C. Kane, R.N., by his scientific skill, foresight, and pluck, as captain of the Calliope, saved his ship in the terrific gale at Samoa, when all other vessels in the harbour, including those of Germany and the United States, went down during the awful hurricane of 1889. The younger children of Sir Robert and Lady Kane were also highly gifted. One of them, who died early, had risen to an eminent position as a surgeon in San Francisco.

Sir Robert Kane departed this life in 1882. He

never recovered the loss of his wife, who predeceased him. Her last illness was a lingering one; and in her the present writer lost a faithful friend, whose companionship was delightful, whose varied attainments were known to intimate friends only, so modest, shy, and retiring was her disposition.

Ferguson owed his acquaintance with Dr Angus Smith of Manchester to the following letter of introduction from Sir Robert Kane:—

ROYAL COLLEGE OF SCIENCE, *24th September* 1872.

MY DEAR FERGUSON,—Allow me to introduce to you my friend Dr Angus Smith, who, not satisfied with distinguishing himself in chemistry, as he has done, has been latterly devoting his attention to the subject of archæology, and naturally is desirous of making the acquaintance of one so conversant with all those matters as yourself.

I need not say more of Dr Smith: you will find reason, when you know him, to thank me for having brought you into communication with a gentleman of so much taste and knowledge both in Science and Literature. Dr Angus Smith is a great friend of Mr Francis Jennings of Cork, whom you know at the Royal Irish Academy and otherwise.

Dr Angus Smith, as already alluded to in a letter of Ferguson's, had made a study of Glen Etive and its vicinity, tracing out the sites associated with the Irish exiles who had made their temporary home in that beautiful district of Scotland. 'The Shores of Loch Etive' was of deep interest to one whose imagination had long been exercised on the story of Deirdré and the Sons of Usnach. He sent his 'Lays

of the Western Gael' to Dr Smith, who thus acknowledged the volume:—

I send you heartily my thanks for your beautiful volume. I began at the beginning and read aloud, and I assure you that the pleasure I had and the pleasure it gave by being heard were most unusual, unalloyed, and elevating.

There is a freshness in these old Celtic stories which to us of modern times speaks of a new [era?], and I only wonder they are so little known when men seek novelties. For, old as they are, they come forth as new. I know that some of the ancient writers speak with too many words and without much grace; but you have seen the soul that was in them, and distilled the spirit to the highest refinement. The actors are seen as a saint of the time might have viewed them had he united his loftiness with the enthusiasm of the bard. That is not quite enough: we have made advance, and the higher life of modern thought shines and beautifies the lines. I shall read some this evening to Bailey, better known as Festus, who is coming to me.—With many thanks unfeigned, I am yours sincerely, ANGUS SMITH.

CHAPTER XXII.

1859–1886.

HIS ATTITUDE TOWARDS POETRY, MUSIC, AND HISTORICAL STUDIES.

"We receive but what we give,
And in our life alone does Nature live:
Ours is her wedding-garment, ours her shroud!
And would we aught behold, of higher worth,
Than that inanimate cold world allowed
To the poor loneless ever-anxious crowd,
Ah! from the soul itself must issue forth
A light, a glory, a fair luminous cloud
Enveloping the Earth—
And from the soul itself must then be sent
A sweet and potent voice, of its own birth,
Of all sweet sounds the life and element!"

—COLERIDGE.

THE centenary of Robert Burns was celebrated in Dublin in 1859 by a dinner at the Mansion-House, and Ferguson was called on to speak on the character and genius of the Scottish poet. His speech was as follows:—

"My Lord Mayor, Mr Parker, and gentlemen, in calling upon me, on this occasion, you do me an honour which I prize the more because I am hardly worthy of it; yet I may, without vanity, acknowledge that on this occasion, when you

celebrate the memory of the great Scottish poet in the metropolis of Ireland, there is a certain propriety in your devolving that honourable task on one like me, who, although by the nativity of many generations an Irishman, am yet by lineage and descent a Scot. Six generations and more have passed since the district of Antrim, in which my infant ears first became familiar with the accents of Galloway, was peopled from that region which has since become famous as the land of Burns. Time has but slightly altered the Scottish accent on our lips; and saving our duty to our own country, our hearts still turn with pride and affection to that noble land whose sons to-day throughout the civilised world offer the tribute of a national homage to the great poet of Scotland. Such a homage has not been paid to any man of letters of modern times. Yet it is not in the extent merely of these demonstrations—although they embrace the whole circle of the globe, wherever Scotchmen have penetrated in the pursuit of duty, of fame, or of fortune—that we find the magnitude and the marvel of the praise that you bestow upon him. It is in the character of the nation that bestows it, and that of the man to whose memory the tribute is offered, that we discern the greatness and the worthiness of your praise. A nation, eager and eminently successful in the pursuit of practical objects, proverbially prudent, habituated to a rigorous self-control, selects for the object of its reverence—not a man like Bentham or like Franklin—not a divine, a philosopher, or an economist, but a child of impulse and of passion—a proud, an improvident, an unworldly man. How comes this? By what spell is it that you are thus drawn together in hundreds and in thousands, from the rising to the setting of the sun, to swell the tribute of honour to the memory of this man with a contagious fervour which draws into the vortex of your own enthusiasm the sister capitals and all the provincial towns in the United Kingdom? Whence comes it, asks the unobservant and the thoughtless mind, that you should select for your highest honours a man apparently so dissimilar to yourselves? The answer to the inquiry—the spell that brings you together—lies in the depth of your own character. It is the old poetic fervour of your race, that faculty which lies at the basis of all

enterprise and of all fortune, although not discerned by those who merely view the surface of the Scottish character, which recognises in the poet—in the man of fervid soul—the true representative of the character of the Scot in its highest and best aspect. Therefore it is that you have well and wisely chosen a poet as the representative of your race and of your nation, a poet who commands the admiration of mankind, a poet who has given utterance to the best sentiments of love, of tenderness, of generosity, of patriotism, and of piety—to the most charming humour and the brightest wit, in numbers perfectly melodious, and in language which, notwithstanding its dialectic peculiarities, is pre-eminently manly, direct, and intelligible. The sentiments belong to the world. The dialect and the poet are your own.

"When it pleased God to ordain that the languages of mankind should be different, He left their hearts the same; and that speech which most directly stirs in the breast of man the common sympathies of our nature is the truest classic: and when we find that those sympathies are evoked by language harmonious in its composition and melodious in its rhythmical arrangement, where rhyme reinforces time, and sense falls in with both, and emotion culminates at every turning-point of the composition, then, by the common consent of mankind, we acknowledge ourselves in the presence and the power of the poet, whether he speaks the language of Attica or of Ayrshire. This is the true test of poetic power, that it stirs the hearts of men deeply and widely by the direct agency of simple and intelligible language. Tried by this test, the poetry of Burns justifies the unexampled honours that to-day are paid to his memory. His poems have the breadth, the simplicity, the ease, and the force of operations of nature. And this is the characteristic of the poetry of the Augustan age of every school of literature, and these demonstrations of yours to-day will do more than all the criticisms of the reviews and magazines to recall our writers from that profitless search after recondite thought and curious felicities of expression which of late in our literature have become too much the fashion, and in which the careful observers of the progress of the literature of older nations might well apprehend the approaching

decay of letters in our own, if the tendency of our favourite writers to abandon the ancient models of simplicity and manliness be not arrested by such demonstrations as ours to-day.

"If these meetings have no other effect than to warn our men of letters that the lasting praises of the generations are not to be obtained by intricate, conceited, and curious compositions, they would confer a boon on literature, and aid in maintaining the standard of taste. But, gentlemen, they have a wider, deeper significance. Men will not forget their nationalities—men will not lay down the ties of birth and of kindred at the chair of any science or of any quasi-science. We must be Scotchmen, we must be Irishmen, and we will honour the memories of the men whose genius has asserted and won for us our own places for ourselves in the temple of British fame. Honour, then, in full measure, heaped and overflowing, to the heaven-born peasant who has borne the harp of his country so high in that temple, that if it be placed a little below the lyre of Shakespeare, it is still so near that if you 'make the chords of one vibrate, those of the other will thrill in harmony,' and who, having achieved that position for the lyrical genius of his country, could say with the modest nobility of a truly manly nature, 'I have been bred to the plough, and I am independent.' Well was it for Burns that he was bred to the plough—that he spent the days of his dawning genius in familiarity with nature, and not amongst the fine ladies and fine gentlemen whose neglect of him has been deplored as a misfortune, but truly was a happy escape for him and for us all. Burns was not ashamed that he was born a son of toil. Why should he? All the pursuits of industry are honourable, especially those of the tiller of the soil. The hands of heroes have been familiar with the plough. Ulysses, the wisest of Homeric worthies, did not blush to confess his prowess in the fields. When reproached with idleness by one of the proud suitors of Penelope, you may remember the noble spirit in which, associating the toils of the husbandman with the glories of the soldier, he replied—

> "'Forbear, Eurymachus; for were we matched
> In work against each other, thou and I
> Mowing in spring-time, when the days are long;
> Or if again it were our task to drive

> Yoked oxen in the plough ; and were the field
> In size four acres ; with a glebe through which
> The share might smoothly glide : then shouldst thou see
> How straight my furrow should be cut and true.
> Or if Saturnian Jove should now excite
> Here, battle, or elsewhere ; and were I armed
> With two bright spears, and with a shield, and bore
> A brazen casque well fitted to my brows :
> Me then thou shouldst behold mingling in fight
> Among the foremost chiefs, nor with the crime
> Of idle beggary shouldst reproach me more.'

Ulysses, gentlemen, did not conceive that skill in the manual labours of the field detracted in aught from his position as a prince and chieftain ; nor in the case of Burns has it detracted one tittle from his pre-eminence as a leader among the intellects of his country. Let no regrets mingle with your festive offerings to his memory. No one with truth can say his life was unhappy. As toil is incident to the eating of daily bread, despondency is incident to the poetic temperament ; and he could not have had that keen enjoyment of existence had he not sometimes suffered those fits of despondency which are inseparable from the poetic temperament. He who enjoyed in a measure so exalted the raptures of love, the delights of friendship, the enchantment of the fancy—no one can affirm that such a man was unhappy. Neither let the libation you pour to his memory be dashed by any bitter thought of supposed neglect or ingratitude in his country. Gentlemen, that is not so. Much as Burns has done for Scotland, Scotland, before Burns was born, had done more for him. He was born the child of a proud, of a renowned and glorious country. For him, as for all the genius of future time, Wallace had made the banks of Irvine holy ground—for him Bruce shook his Carrick spear—for him, as for every child of genius that the soil of Scotland should produce to the end of time, the genius of Scottish music had made the hills and valleys of his country vocal with melodies soliciting to song — for him courageous-hearted ancestors, brave and pious men, had fought and bled — had watched and prayed on mountain and on moor—had offered up the sacrifice of their blood for Scotland's religious freedom, — that the cottier on his

Saturday at e'en might be free to open his big hall Bible by his own hearthstone, and that amid scenes of patriarchal simplicity, piety, and virtue, of manly self-reliance and bold self-assertion, the young germ of genius might unfold itself in safety. Let no man, therefore, say that Scotland had not done her part. No, she has not been wanting. She is no unworthy mother of her noble son. In honouring him you honour her and yourselves. With full hearts, then, and with consciences discharged of all feeling of breach of duty towards the man whose memory we are met to celebrate, let us drain this bumper toast to the memory of Robert Burns."

The toast was duly honoured. Air—"Ye banks and braes o' bonnie Doon."

What Burns had done for Scotland in uniting her music to appropriate words, Thomas Moore did in his day and in his measure for Ireland. To Ferguson the "Melodies" of Moore were a source of the purest delight. As poems they were familiar in his mouth as household words, and, when joined to the music of his country and sung with feeling, they enraptured him. In writing to an American correspondent he thus expressed himself:—

One of our countrymen, Moore, found the song-music of Ireland, with few exceptions, united to incongruous and often vulgar words. He rescued these enchanting airs from that unworthy connection, and made them familiar in the ear of the world in association with the most apposite, elegant, and touching of all national lyrics. The times in which he lived invited to generous and noble aspirations, and it is hard to say whether he more excelled in giving beauty to the expression of those feelings of the human breast which are universal, or of those which in his day were called forth by occasion and circumstances. May your celebration of his memory keep alive these sentiments of fraternity, of freedom, and of that social harmony which is sweeter even than his own songs!

The intense pleasure which Ferguson received from such music as he understood, had its highest gratification when Herr Sjödèn, a Swedish harpist, visited Ireland in 1879 to add to his stores of national airs. This accomplished gentleman often brought his harp to Ferguson's house, and enchanted him, and all other listeners, with his performance. Lady Ferguson gave Herr Sjödèn a melody to which he begged Sir Samuel to write words. He consented, and produced "The Lark in clear air," words which rendered perfectly the sentiment of the music for which they were composed. Sir Samuel's verses ran thus:—

Dear thoughts are in my mind, and my soul soars enchanted,
As I hear the sweet lark sing in the clear air of the day,
For a tender beaming smile to my hope has been granted,
And to-morrow she shall hear all my fond heart would say.

I shall tell her all my love, all my soul's adoration,
And I think she will hear me, and will not say me Nay:
It is this that gives my soul all its joyous elation,
As I hear the sweet lark sing in the clear air of the day."

Herr Sjödèn was enraptured with the melody, which, it is believed, had not previously been noted down, it having been imparted orally to Lady Ferguson by an old Irish gentlewoman who called it "The Tailor's Son." It was sung at a concert given by the Swedish harper before he left Dublin.

"The Lark in clear air," as taken down from Lady Ferguson's singing by her friend Lady Grainger-Stewart of Edinburgh, has been published by Mr

A. P. Graves in his 'Irish Song-Book,' 1895, a volume of the "New Irish Library"; and Ferguson's version from the Irish of "Pastheen Finn" has been set to music by A. A. Needham, and is a charming song. "Cean Dubh Deelish" has been published by Messrs Boosey and Co.; while passages selected from "The Forging of the Anchor" have, as already mentioned, been set to music by Sir Julius Benedict, and performed at the Norwich Festival.

On leaving Dublin for Croom Castle, Co. Limerick, the country home of Robert Lyons, M.D., Herr Sjödèn wrote to Ferguson:—

With my best thanks for your most kind letter and enclosure, I beg much to apologise for my delaying the answer so long. Shortly after my concert I went down to have some days' rest at this beautiful old country place, and could not find time to call upon you and Lady Ferguson before I left. I need not tell you about the complete success of "The Tailor's Son," or rather "The Lark in clear air." You know about it before this, I am sure. I am indeed proud of the result of my attempting to bring out the Irish airs on their own instrument, and I am fully aware how much I owe the success to yourself and Lady Ferguson. I have not yet been able to find any Irish melody fully suitable to your beautiful poetry, but I trust I shall be successful before long. When back in Dublin, I will take an early opportunity of calling on yourself and Lady Ferguson, and remain, dear Sir Samuel, with my best compliments, your very sincerely and obliged

ADOLF SJÖDÈN.

To this Sir Samuel replied:—

I have written one song about the larks, and here is another, but not so joyous. Marry me a good Irish air to it, and give another concert, and if Miss Craig will sing it I'll

promise to attend. You will find what I take to be the parent air of "Jock o' Hazeldean" in Bunting under the name of the "Yellow Beggarman." It suits in tune and rhythm, I believe, but may be wanting in dignity and force. The rhyme being common "eights and sixes," you will be able probably to find something better, for in that kind of learning I am a mere dunce. When you hit on something suitable, favour me with a call; and meanwhile believe me very faithfully yours,

SAML. FERGUSON.

The words, considering the pathetic character of the air, are singularly unsuitable. They are rustic to the verge of vulgarity.

It is a lovely air, but melancholy-sweet. I have caught some of the sentiments in words, which I also enclose, but I had no tune in mind when I wrote them, and they do not at all go to "Pastheen Finn." "The dear old Irish air," if it had an air to go to, might be a popular variety of the sad species of Irish song.

As regards the Pastheen, I don't know the tune sufficiently to say whether I am master of the rhythm; but here is the second stanza of an incomplete couple of verses which have been in my mind in connection with a poor fellow who had the misfortune to be a Glasgow Bank shareholder, and the blessing of a wife who helped him to bear his reverses manfully.

Even this wants the sweetness that the air demands, but such as it is you can try how far it suits in rhyme, time, and sentiment.

SIT BY ME.

Oh were we happy rich ones, as once we were,
The diamond and ruby might deck your hair;
But your breast, oh what jewel could a king place there
Worth one throb of the love it bears me?
Then, dear one, sit by me, close to me, close to me,
Dear one, sit by me, hand in hand;
Where were the sorrow I could not withstand,
With you to comfort me, dear one?

I am endeavouring to get you the Irish words of the [air] (Moore's "The Dawning of Morn," "The Daylight sinking"). They have a very effective refrain—

"Ho! ro! stauk an Varagay!
Ho! ro! stauka na wo!"

—Yours very faithfully, SAML. FERGUSON.

After his departure from Ireland no tidings reached the Fergusons of the harpist; but when journeying in Scandinavia in 1885, they learned Herr Sjödèn's supposed address, and sent, on chance of their reaching him, a few lines on a post-card:—

ULVIC, HARDANGERFIORD, *7th July* 1885.

MY DEAR HERR SJÖDÈN,—Travelling now in Norway, we learn the address of the renowned harpist who some years since delighted the ears and moved the souls and exalted the hearts of so many of us in Dublin; and we hasten to send you the assurance that it rejoices us to hear of your continued welfare.

Enchanter who reignest
Supreme o'er the North,
Who hast wiled the coy spirit
Of true music forth,
In vain Europe's minstrels
To honour aspire
When thy swift slender fingers
Go forth on the wire!

Next address—Post Office, Stockholm.

SAMUEL FERGUSON.
MARY C. FERGUSON.

This card, addressed to Herr Adolf Sjödèn, Harpist, Helsingfors, failed to find him for whom it was intended, but reached the senders in "Dublin, Ireland,"

quite covered with postal stamps. Nor did further intelligence of the accomplished musician ever reach them.

In a letter to Mr W. B. Scott, poet and artist, who died a few years ago at Chelsea, Ferguson, in thanking him for the gift of his poems, expressed his own views on the volume, and on Wordsworth, Shelley, Keats, and Byron:—

I have read the volume with complete sympathy and a great deal of pleasure. Your sonnets, "Beda," "The Duke's Funeral," are among those which most impressed me. Your estimate of Wordsworth comes very near my own, though in entertaining it I have always felt myself guilty of a sort of literary impiety; for one of the finest and purest natures I ever knew—I speak of my friend the late Dr Petrie—was so profoundly imbued with the Wordsworthian spirit that admiration of him has been regarded by me almost as a religion, of which I would wish to, but could not, become a devotee. Yet in selecting the best pieces of the 'Golden Treasury' to read to some innocent and candid minds the other day on a hillside in Savoy, the "Daffodils" gave as much pleasure as even Shelley's "Skylark." I was immensely gratified by the sight of Shelley's bust, which Mrs Scott, when I had the pleasure of calling at your house some months ago, was good enough to show me. It breathes a divine genius through all the juvenile lineaments. Undoubtedly he was the sublimest poet of them all. You have not in the least degree outsung his praises. But Society had a right to protect itself against his magnificent anarchies, and I cannot think he suffered any real wrong at its hands. Keats, "by a mousing owl hacked at and slain," comes, I think, next in lyrical loveliness. Then there is the majesty of Byron sometimes dominating both, as one mountain will overtop another as the spectator climbs or descends. It was a much grander poetic age than, I suppose, England will ever see again. The best of our own day are but *petite maîtres*

in comparison with these noble spirits whom you have justly celebrated.

The volume of Poems published by Ferguson in 1880, of which a copy was sent for Mr W. B. Scott's acceptance, brought in return the following letter:—

92 CHEYNE WALK, CHELSEA,
14th May 1881.

MY DEAR SIR SAMUEL,—I have to thank you very truly for the literary treat of reading your volume of poems, On seeing it advertised I had intended to possess the book, being really a buyer of new books to some extent, but allowed the matter to pass out of mind, and now you have enabled me to possess it. Your versions of ancient Irish subjects are most interesting; to me the field is new, and evidently very rich: it is wonderful that so little attention has been paid hitherto to these national legends as poetic subjects. I had lately Joyce's selection of early Irish stories, and at the same time Tennyson's last volume, in which I detected the origin of the "Voyage of Mael dune" and its rendering in modern form; but none of the historical incidents you have worked upon were in that volume, nor, I suppose, have we outsiders any access to your originals.

In one respect I find I was wrong in my anticipations of your volume. When a very young man and younger writer, Professor Wilson (Ch. North) showed me your "Forging of the Dolphin's Anchor" with evident delight, saying he wished it had been his own. Never from that early time have I forgotten that poem, and often have in a vague way hoped to find it again, and now I thought I should possibly have that luck. All of these poems are presumably lately written,—I congratulate you, and envy your power of retaining your powers. For myself I fear the day is over; nothing but a sonnet now and then comes to me.

Will you kindly give our compliments to Lady Ferguson? and believe me very truly yours, WILLIAM B. SCOTT.

Ferguson, ever generously appreciative of the writings of others, had a word of cordial praise for a rustic bard of his native Antrim, David Herbison of Dunclug, a tenant on Lord Waveney's estate. In a letter to his Lordship, June 30, 1873, Ferguson thus commends the weaver poet to his consideration :—

Turning over some recent miscellanies, I found the enclosed notice of, as I believe, one of your Lordship's Antrim tenants. Old David is really a credit to his "country-side," and deserves all that is said of him in the paragraph. I lately revisited the scenes of my own youth in the neighbouring valleys of Six-Mile-Water and of Glenwhirry. Owing to a misadventure in the loss of my luggage on the way, I had not time to inquire for the singer of Dunclug. I assure your Lordship there are few owners of estates in either country who can point to more genius in a humble dwelling on their lands, and I think it may gratify your Lordship to see what is thought of him here.

"Here is David Herbison, from the central glens of Antrim, entering on his seventieth year with new glorifyings of love and beauty, and fresh breathings of honest affection, in another volume of poems. David is a weaver, and speaks directly to his own class. Indirectly, he addresses himself to such of the upper classes as do not demand extraordinary æsthetic niceties, and who, if they dare venture an opinion in private, would confess themselves sometimes a little sick of the sort of thing considered correct by the fashionable critics. He sings, like the bird on the bush, to please himself, and has earned sufficient popularity to know that what he sings will go to the hearts of hundreds of honest hearty fellows, and of pretty young lasses tripping barefoot about the 'burns' of Buckna, Kilrea, and other northern latitudes, where the songs of Burns form a constituent element with native oxygen in the air they breathe. Poor old fellow! sorrow has laid a heavy hand on him; but the pressure has given increased volume to the stream of song, in which all his joys and woes run out,

and make themselves partakers in the great sea of human sympathy. . . .

"We have no doubt a wholesome humanity has been conveyed to hundreds of people, both old and young, who breathe the pure air of the Braid, and love to hear the birds singing in the spring season. Of course the theme of themes with all poets, old and young, is the old story. David invests all the glens, groves, 'knowes,' and 'water-sides' within a summer day's journey of Dunclug with amorous associations, and indeed sanctifies them with the emotions of a pure and innocent passion. He says of himself, with truth, in his modest preface, 'If my simple verses are not polished to the taste of the refined and better educated classes of society, I feel perfectly satisfied that they do not contain any sentiment of an immoral, irreligious, or injurious tendency.' . . .

"We have dwelt at some length on the works of the humble man, from a desire to recognise the social value of such a faculty as he possesses, when turned, without interference with life's legitimate callings, to the promotion of innocent pleasures, good morals, and amiable manners among the people. During a long life Herbison has earned his daily bread honestly at his loom. If the Muse has from time to time irradiated with her presence the little 'spence' at Dunclug, it has been in the intervals of regulated labour. We earnestly trust that when the shuttle shall begin to glide languidly through the warp—as it soon must do—David's declining days may be made easy (and a little thing would do it) by those who have reaped the fruit of his genius in the diffusion of civilising influences among the class below them."

Ferguson sent to the Co. Antrim poet a copy of his 'Lays of the Western Gael,' which was thus acknowledged by Mr Herbison:—

I had the honour of receiving on Saturday last your new and beautiful volume of poems, for which I kindly thank you. I assure you I have derived more pleasure from it than from any other book that has come in my way for these many

years past. Its perusal not only pleased but delighted me, as I am sure it will thousands of my fellow-countrymen, as well as all who may have the pleasure of seeing it. It has long been my opinion that Ulster has produced no other poet so capable of handling our legendary lore as you, nor have we one whose ballads are so deservedly popular: they are written in a style so simple and yet so pleasing, that many of them have long since become favourites with the Presbyterians of this locality, in particular "Willie Gilliland" and "Una Phelimy." The latter, I am sorry to say, you have omitted in the volume now before me, as you have also done "When this Old Cap was New," which was a favourite of my mother's, and who sang it uncommonly well; and were she living to see it so neglected by you, I assure you you would receive from her an Irish *ban* that would make your ears ring for hours after. There is also another ballad of yours well known here which you have omitted—that is, "The Fairy Well of Lagnanay," which I think very pretty. Now I do not see for what reason the above-named pieces have been cast aside as unworthy of appearing in the same volume with "Willie Gilliland," &c. They are more to my liking than some of your translations from the Irish,—though I do not object to the translations; they are in general pretty, and no doubt will be favourites with all who are acquainted with the originals: but my conviction is that your fame will rest entirely on your own original pieces, which, if I am not mistaken, will procure for you a niche in the Temple of Fame where few, very few, have ascended to in this country. I have, in fact, never read anything that pleased me better than the "Burial of King Cormac" and "Aideen's Grave": they stand highest in my estimation of any of the songs in the 'Lays of the Western Gael.' And now let me thank you kindly again for them, while I remain very truly yours,

D. Herbison.

The poem here alluded to as sung by Mr Herbison's mother, and a favourite, was an early production of Ferguson's, and is here cited:—

WHEN THIS OLD CAP WAS NEW.

Since this old cap was new,
Now fifty-two long years
(It was new at the review
Of the Dublin Volunteers),
There have been brought to pass
With us a change or two;
They're altered times, alas!
Since this old cap was new.

Our Parliament did sit
Then in our native land,
What good came of the loss of it
I cannot understand;
Although full plain I see
That changes not a few
Have fallen on the country
Since this old cap was new.

They are very worthy fellows
(And much I'd be distressed
To think them else) who tell us
That all is for the best;
Though full as ill inclined,
Now the bargain's closed, to rue,
Yet I can't but call the times to mind
When this old cap was new.

What rights we wanted then
Were asked for above-board
By a hundred thousand gentlemen,
And rendered at the word;
'Twas thus in fair daylight,
With all the world to view,
We claimed and gained our right
When this old cap was new!

But patriots nowadays,
And State reformers, when
A starving people's cry they raise,
Turn out like trenchermen.
Ah! we'd have done the work,
If it had been to do,
With other tool than spoon or fork,
When this old cap was new.

The nobles of the country
Were then our neighbours near,
And 'mong us squires and gentry
Made always jolly cheer!
Ah! every night at some one's
Or other's was a crew
Of merry lords and commons,
When this old cap was new.

They're altered times entirely,
As plainly now appears;
Our landlord's face we barely see
Past once in seven years.
And now the man meets scorn
As his coat is green or blue;
We had no need our coats to turn
When this old cap was new.

Good counsel to propose
I have but little skill;
Yet ere a vain lament I close,
In humble trust I will
Beseech for all His aid
Who knows what all should do,
And pray, as I have often prayed
When this old cap was new.

God bless that honest gentleman
And noble prince the King,
And grant him long in peace to plan
The best in everything;

And give unto his Ministers
As honest hearts and true,
And the days perhaps may come again
When this old cap was new.

Ferguson's attitude towards those of his contemporaries less fortunate than himself in worldly circumstances was one of sympathy and helpful endeavour. His efforts to rescue Mangan from his bondage to evil habits have already been alluded to, as well as his appreciation of the genius which gave to Ireland the renderings of O'Hussey's "Ode to the Maguire" and the "Lament for the Princes of Tyrone and Tyrconnel." One of the first visits which Ferguson took his wife to pay after their marriage was to the poor but decent home of a sickly mechanic, the poet Fraser, who, while earning his crust in a poor town dwelling by manual labour, could project his imagination into the scenes of his childhood on the Bog of Clondallagh and the banks of the Brosna, which he thus celebrated in verse:—

BROSNA'S BANKS

. . . . . .

"For there upon my boyhood broke
The dreamy voice of nature first;
And every word the vision spoke,
How deeply has my spirit nursed!
A woman's love, a lyre, or pen,
A rescued land, a nation's thanks,
A friendship with the world, and then
A grave upon the Brosna's banks.

. . . . . .

Yet idle as those visions seem,
  They were a strange and faithful guide,
When Heaven itself had scarce a gleam
  To light my darkened life beside;
And if from grosser guilt escaped
  I feel no dying dread, the thanks
Are due unto the Power that shaped
  My visions on the Brosna's banks.

And love, I feel, will come at last,
  Albeit too late to comfort me;
And fetters from the land be cast,
  Though I may not survive to see.
If then the gifted, good, and brave
  Admit me to their glorious ranks,
My memory may, though not my grave,
  Be green upon the Brosna's banks."

Thomas Irwin—"the mad poet," as O'Donovan called him in a letter to Ferguson—was nevertheless a man of genius, to whose wants as well as his volumes Ferguson always subscribed. Among his 'Poems, Songs and Romances, Versicles and Sonnets,' are many lovely lyrics. Most touching is "The Poet to his Verses," with its sad but too true refrain—

"Poor Singing Children gain but little gold."

THE POET TO HIS VERSES.

"Come to my fireside. Sing to me to-night,
  Poor Verses, echoes of my vanished years;
Though all unknown to fame and fortune's light,
  My heart still guards you with its smiles and tears.
Old Memories, though in jarring music sung,
  And rough to other ears, still sweet to mine,
Your voice recalls the days when I was young,
  And morning makes the dullest things divine:

Sing, Verses, sing! the night is dark and cold;
Sing, though your voices gain but little gold.

. . . . . .

Dear lonely offspring of a lonely heart,
No rich saloon resounds with your acclaim;
No eager student wafts you from the mart,
Or critic stings you with an epigram.
Beside me rest concealed from stranger minds,
Content if some old comrade, loved and known,
Lists to your lay by evening light, and finds
Within your soul some tremblings of his own.
Sing, Little Ones, and round me closer fold;
Such Singing Children gain but little gold.

Yes, we have wandered heart by heart, unseen,
Round foreign shores, and through the ocean's blast,
Far from the memoried Isle whose fields of green
Sleep in the spectral stillness of the past:
Oft, oft, when far away, I've looked through tears
Into the dying light that o'er them shone,
Where all I loved amid the happier years,
Where all save you who sing of them, are gone.
Sing, Memories, sing! the heart that can behold
Heaven in the sunset little heeds its gold."

Thomas Aird, whose friendship Ferguson had made when in Edinburgh in 1832, was a writer characterised by strength and originality. "The Devil's Dream on Mount Aksbeck" is perhaps his best known poem. Like his countryman Burns, Aird seems to have sympathised with "Auld Nickie-ben." But the Grisly Terror in Aird's poem, far from taking "a thought and men'," will not abate his pride and malice. He remains true to the conception, which Milton has made immortal, of the Fallen Cherub. Mr Aird wrote from Dumfries, 13th February 1863:—

Along with this I send you a copy of a new edition of my book of poems. Will you do me the favour to accept it, with my affectionate good wishes for Mrs Ferguson and yourself?

I have revised two or three of the longer poems somewhat sternly, and have added five or six little pieces. The last written of these is "Songs of the Seasons." Your eye, I think, is sympathetic with my own. Pray look at these "Songs" as faithful little photographs of our Scottish scenery and rural life, and see if they correspond with what you have in Ireland.—Ever faithfully yours, THOMAS AIRD.

One of these "Songs of the Seasons" runs thus:—

"Storm in his blackness forth
Hangs on the suffering north;
Wide go his wings, away he springs,
Far back the tumult of his hair he flings,
The winds are in his roaring wings.
Tearing through forests, making gulfs of night,
Rushes the tyrannous Might.

The secret of the April bud
Bursts to the dewy liquor sweet.
Old men come forth to warm their blood,
And chirp upon the sunny seat.

Black shadows sail, Lights flash in turn:
What lustre on yon showery sea!
On every leaf of every tree
Drops of molten glory burn.

The Autumn eve, so warm and golden,
Lies on the hamlet quaint and olden,
Quaint and quiet. Crofts of wheat
Strength and Youth are yonder reaping;
Age at her door, babes at her feet,
Half is spinning, half is sleeping."

MOUNTAIN HALL, DUMFRIES,
November 14, 1865.

MY DEAR FERGUSON,—Special thanks for the photograph. Allowing for the weightier manhood of purpose and business, it harmonises wonderfully well with my recollections of 1832. By birth and name you are a Celt: still that face and head seem to me to belong to the Saxon family.

According to your request I sent you a carte of myself for Mrs Ferguson's album. It is too small for anything like the effect of a portrait, but I have nothing better at present.

I have looked out eagerly for you since the 20th of March, having a great desire to see you once more; but I presume you are now home, without having been able to run over to Dumfries.

Let me now thank you for the paper on the Maeve Ogham. I made the best use of it I could. After reading it carefully and with peculiar interest myself, I laid it as a gift on the table of our Natural History and Antiquarian Society (our President, Sir William Jardine, being in the chair), and called special attention to your suggestion that there may be Oghams in our district, so that our local antiquaries may look out for the tallies. God be with you both!—Ever yours,

THOMAS AIRD.

CASTLEBANK, DUMFRIES, *June* 19, 1872.

Many thanks for your kind note. The above is my present address. Most acceptable to me will be your new poem. The movement of our respective minds may not be quite the same, but with the poetry of none of my other contemporaries do I sympathise so thoroughly as with yours.

Happy you, who have such a prop as Mrs Ferguson. God bless you both!—Ever yours affectionately,

THOMAS AIRD.

Among Ferguson's seniors for whom he had a cordial regard was Sir James Murray. His son, John Fisher Murray, was the author of some lovely lyrics.

His younger son, Edward, was an accomplished man, a good dramatic reader. Sir James Murray's daughter and her husband, David R. Pigot, now Master in Chancery, were intimate friends of Ferguson. Master Pigot, like his father the late Lord Chief Baron, has a fine literary taste and great social charm. It is believed that the sketch of Sir James Murray from which the following extracts are taken was written by Ferguson, for with it is a letter of the kind old gentleman penned in his eighty-second year. "Your noble book," he says, "which I now return, kept me ten days alive. I would be glad to survive ten days more if you can get me your other valued book, which I will then return with best thanks."

He represented amongst us, during the last forty years, the characteristic shrewdness, humour, and manly kindliness of the Belfast people of the last generation. There was something truly liberal and dignified in his manners and in his person. No one could more effectively give a word of good advice to the young, or of encouragement to the deserving, or with a more pungent wit could rebuke the vain or arrogant. A most perfect tolerance in matters of creed and party distinguished him. . . . He had started in his medical career in that arena of all energetic competition, the town of Belfast. Here he struck out that discovery which has made his name well known in practical chemistry. Magnesia had only been used in a solid form up to 1812, when he devised the method of administering it in liquid solution. So material a step in curative science, coupled with his recognised medical talents, brought him wealth and reputation, and introduced him, while still a young man, to the notice and patronage of the great. Drawn by Viceregal invitation to the metropolis, when he had passed through about one-half of his career, he at once took his position in the leading ranks of the Dublin profes-

sion. . . . Amongst his most remarkable inventions we may particularise that for utilising the principle of atmospheric pressure in the administrations of air-baths of any required density or rarity, and that for the exhibition of electricity as a curative agent. These were conceptions of entire originality when first propounded by him. . . . Numerous books, pamphlets, and papers on medical and scientific subjects show the wide range of his knowledge and the energy of his intellect. A calm philosophy characterised him at all times and in all his pursuits, and cheered and brightened the evening of his days.

Others among Ferguson's friends were labourers in the field of Irish history. Dr R. R. Madden, after an eventful life as Colonial Secretary of Western Australia, Commissioner of Inquiry into the Slave-trade, West African Settlements, Special Magistrate at Jamaica, and Superintendent of Liberated Africans in Cuba, finally settled in his native land, and became Secretary to the Loan Fund Board in Dublin Castle. Dr Madden had been a traveller at a time when journeying abroad was less easy than at present. France, Italy, Constantinople, Crete, Egypt, and Palestine were familiar ground. He paid three visits to the United States, and resided for some years in Portugal, and in the course of his long life published no less than forty volumes. Of these the earliest were his 'Travels in the East,' 'The Mussulman,' 'The Infirmities of Genius,' and in 1842 he published his *magnum opus*, 'History of the United Irishmen.' It has been stated that this work, on which many years of labour had been bestowed, involved a great sacrifice of personal interests. Dr Madden collected

much of his material in America, where many of the surviving actors in the struggles of 1798 and 1803 were living. Had the publication been much longer delayed, "the opportunity would have been lost of obtaining that information, and the history of one of the most important periods of British rule in Ireland must have remained involved in the darkness and confusion by which ignorance, prejudice, and misrepresentation had surrounded it." Of this work a second edition, revised and enlarged, was published in 1858.

My dear Ferguson [wrote Dr Madden in 1869],—That you should do a kind act in the kindest possible manner, and no less graciously than frankly, efficiently, and to the purpose, ought not to surprise me. But I am surprised, I confess, that any communication to me on the subject of . . . should give me the pleasure—heartfelt pleasure—which your note of yesterday evening gave me. My dear, dear friend, my respect and esteem for you are not of a slow growth or a late origin—they are as old as our acquaintance, and they are of that nature that I cannot resist your counsel; and I may with truth say the mere expression of any wish of yours would have more weight with me than any advice that could be given to me by other friends. In short, I will do as you desire. . . . There is an observation of the elder Disraeli that has much truth in it: "Literary friendships are marked by another peculiarity; the true philosophical spirit has learned to bear that shock of contrary opinions which minds less meditative are unequal to encounter. Men of genius live in the unrestrained communication of their ideas, and confide even their caprices with a freedom which sometimes startles ordinary observers. We see literary men the most opposite in dispositions and opinions drawing from each other that fulness of knowledge which unfolds the certain, the probable, the doubtful. Topics which break the world into fac-

tions and sects, and truths which ordinary men are doomed only to hear from a malignant adversary, they gather from a friend. If neither yields up his opinions to the other, they are at least certain of silence and a hearing; but usually

'The wise new wisdom from the wise acquire.'"

—Yours, my dear friend, ever faithfully, R. R. MADDEN.

Dr John M'Donnell, another octogenarian friend, wrote in his eighty-third year his 'Ulster Civil War of 1641,' provoked thereto by the perusal of Mr Froude's 'English in Ireland,' which he terms "a most mischievous production." He speaks of himself as "an uncompromising Protestant," one who believes that it is "clearly the true interest of Ireland to form a part of the British empire, by an equal, firm, and affectionate union with England and Scotland," yet a warm advocate of the "cause of equal justice to his Roman Catholic fellow-countrymen." Dr M'Donnell preserved his vigour of mind and warmth of heart for many years subsequent to the publication of this work, and long survived his son Randal, spoken of already in connection with the North-East Circuit.

Ferguson concurred in the main with Dr M'Donnell's estimate of Froude's work, and resented his aspersions upon Ireland and the Irish. Even Mr Froude's brilliant and attractive style could not compensate for that love of paradox which led him to sacrifice truth to his craving for originality. In Ferguson's judgment Mr Lecky—whose History to some extent covers the same period—possesses those qualifications which must secure permanent appreciation: breadth of view,

grasp, freedom from prejudice, unbiassed statement of facts, and a simple desire for truth in preference to novelty.

Among the writers on Irish history who were intimate with Ferguson was Alexander George Richey, a barrister of marked ability. Dr Richey delivered in 1869 a course of lectures on the History of Ireland in Alexandra College, Dublin. These were so much appreciated that he was called on in the following year to continue the series in Trinity College. The first course ended with the year 1534. The second carried on the narrative to the Plantation of Ulster, 1608. Till then, Ulster had owned the sway of local chiefs, of whom the most important were O'Neill and O'Donnell.

From the accession of the House of Tudor the policy of England towards the nominally subject but practically independent Irish chieftains was vigorously pursued. These were called on to surrender their territories, taking them back with hereditary titles under feudal tenure. The inducement offered to them was that the succession would be thus secured to their direct heirs. Under Irish custom they were elected for life only—the tribe selecting as successor to the chief the ablest or most popular man of his family. The Tanist, or heir-apparent, might be an uncle, brother, or nephew, if the chief's son were under age. Thus under Brehon Law, if a chief rebelled and was defeated, his life alone paid the penalty; the land was still held by the clan.

Greed for the land, and a desire for its appropriation, explains the policy of England under the Tudors and Stuarts. O'Neill had become Earl of Tyrone, with succession to his son, Baron of Dungannon. O'Donnell held his principality, now known as Donegal, as Earl of Tyrconnel.

Tyrone held his own against the forces of Queen Elizabeth until, the resources of his country being well-nigh exhausted, he submitted towards the close of her reign to her Lord Deputy. He had hardly become an obedient subject when tidings of the Queen's death reached him. He comported himself, however, as loyal during the early years of her successor, though distrusted by the English officials in Dublin Castle.

The Earl of Tyrone, who seems to have been unconscious that he was an object of suspicion, was with the Deputy in the August of 1607, when he received an intimation from a relative on the Continent that his life was in danger, and that he would be arrested on a charge of conspiracy. So serious was the risk that his informant sent a ship to convey O'Neill and O'Donnell from Ireland. This vessel had anchored in Lough Swilly, and on the 14th of September 1607 bore away the voluntary exiles, who were never to return. "A distinguished crew was this for one ship; for it is certain that the sea never carried, and that the winds never wafted, from the Irish shores individuals more illustrious or noble in genealogy, or more renowned for deeds of valour, prowess, and high achievements." So testify the Four Masters, annalists of Donegal, who

wrote the history of these events almost at the time of their occurrence.

The Rev. C. P. Meehan, in his 'Fate and Fortunes of Hugh O'Neill, Earl of Tyrone, and Rory O'Donnell, Earl of Tyrconnel; their Flight from Ireland and Death in Exile,' gives minute and touching details of their wanderings on the Continent. Their mortal remains are interred in the Church of S. Pietro in Montorio, at Rome,—a spot which cannot be visited unmoved by an Irish pilgrim, nor without recalling the pathetic wail of O'Donnell's bard, so finely translated by Clarence Mangan, and addressed to Nuala, the sister of the Earl of Tyrconnel:—

"Then, daughter of O'Donnell, dry
Thine overflowing eyes, and turn
Thy heart aside;
For Adam's race is born to die,
And sternly the sepulchral urn
Mocks human pride!

Look not, nor sigh for earthly throne,
Nor place thy trust in arm of clay,
But on thy knees
Uplift thy soul to God alone,
For all things go their destined way
As He decrees."

To grasp the problems presented by the Ireland of to-day, it is necessary to master such facts of history as the Plantation of Ulster, 1608-1620, the rising of the dispossessed natives in 1641, and the dealings with the estates of the Anglo-Irish by the Earl of Strafford, King Charles I.'s Viceroy in Ireland. Then followed

the campaign of Cromwell and the parcelling out of lands to his soldiers in 1652; the Act of Settlement, 1662, on the Restoration of Charles II.; and the Revolution Settlement, following the victory of William of Orange at the Boyne, 1690, which culminated in the enactment of the Penal Laws. These may be conveniently studied in the exhaustive work of the Rev. George Hill, 'An Historical Account of the Plantation in Ulster,' published in 1877; 'The Ulster Civil War of 1641, and its Consequences,' by John M'Donnell, M.D., 1879; and 'The Cromwellian Settlement of Ireland,' by J. P. Prendergast, Esq., 1865. To each of these remarkable books may be applied the words of Camden: "If any there be which are desirous to be strangers in their own soile, and forrainers in their own citie, they may so continue, and therein flatter themselves. For such like I have not written these lines, nor taken these paines."

Mr Hill describes the progress of his work in the following letter:—

My dear Mr Ferguson,—I feel very much obliged, indeed, by your kind invitation, and I would esteem it a great privilege to have a chat with you, and your *better half*, on several questions connected with our dear old Innisfail. I have read Mrs Ferguson's very interesting little volume on Ireland before the Conquest. It is one of the few books that I have ever met which we close with the reflection or impression that it is so *tiny* in its dimensions. I am happy to hear that she is preparing an account of the once great Northern family of *Magennis*, and I fancy she will not have great difficulty in obtaining ample original materials.

I have got another student to say that he will endeavour to

copy what I want from the old Quit-Rent Book, so that in the meantime I shall not be required to visit your great city; but should I ever do so, I shall not fail to give myself the pleasure of calling. I am about drawing my very troublesome manuscript to a close. I have got 150 copies subscribed for, and as this will about cover the expense of printing, I suppose it will be better to have it done as soon as possible. I have a goodly number of original papers, and my plan generally has been to introduce these as part of the text, accompanying them with notes. I have carefully prepared a vast lot of notes rather than clog or confuse the narrative with the introduction of many topics. I have a few valuable original documents for the Appendix, one of which is a "Briefe Description" of the County of Antrim by an old gentleman named Richard Dobbs, who began it, he says, in May 1683. This has never been printed, and, I would hope, not even generally known about.—I am very truly yours,

GEO. HILL.

In the introduction to 'The Cromwellian Settlement of Ireland' Mr Prendergast asks a pertinent question: "What were the crimes of the Irish to cause the English for so many ages to treat them as alien enemies, to refuse them the right to bring actions in the courts set up by the English in Ireland, and to adhere to their cherished scheme of depriving the nation of their lands?" To this he replies as follows:—

Their crime was to be possessed of lands the English coveted. Moreover, the English could not endure that the Irish should enjoy their lands in a freer manner than themselves; and the Irish could not submit to give them up, or to change their free and independent title into feudal tenure. The English planted in Ireland soon learned to prefer Irish freedom to feudal thraldom. This became a fresh crime in the Irish — they corrupted the English, and both became odious, and the lands of each were to be confiscated.

Mr J. P. Prendergast was in social intercourse a man of genial manners, full of anecdote and information. He took special interest in the architecture of the fine pre-Union residences in Dublin, which have for the most part stately well-proportioned interiors. The decorations on walls, ceilings, cornices, &c., are elegant in taste; the chimney-pieces usually marble beautifully inlaid, the fireplaces ornamented with fine brass-work. In many of these old houses paintings on panel or copper, by Angelica Kaufmann, are let into walls and ceilings. Ferguson's was a house of this type, and Mr Prendergast was in the habit of bringing his friends to see it. He was an authority upon the time of erection, the special points of interest, and the former occupants of mansions which date from the days of the Volunteers.

Another Dublin house of this period, 38 North Great George's Street—also decorated with Angelica Kaufmann's paintings—is the town residence of the Rev. J. P. Mahaffy, F.T.C.D., who holds a position in letters widely recognised at home and abroad. Dr Mahaffy is master of many subjects, but in especial of ancient history and the literature of Greece and Egypt. He is author of a standard Commentary on Kant; a series of volumes on the Social Life of the Greeks, special studies on Greek Egypt, comprising the deciphering and editing of the Petrie Papyri and a history of the Ptolemies; Essays on Education both Greek and modern; and of many personal sketches of eminent men in the 'Athenæum.'

Professor Mahaffy is a ready speaker, an attractive lecturer, a brilliant conversationalist, and a genial and kindly friend and neighbour. His admirable wife—a woman of that rare type described in the Book of Proverbs—shares in his intellectual tastes and pursuits. She makes his home delightful to his friends, and finds time to devote to the administration of many of the charities of Dublin.

Neighbours so kindly, with children very dear to Ferguson and his wife, greatly cheered his declining years. After his death the following sketch by Dr Mahaffy, published in the 'Athenæum,' is here taken from the article in 'Blackwood' already quoted:—

In an eloquent passage, Professor Mahaffy tells the world how, in his own life, Sir Samuel was guided by that "higher wisdom," making an atmosphere of cheerful life around him.

"Keeping open house with perfect simplicity in the midst of a large company of relations and friends, who all loved him, he moved about among them, seasoning his words, especially to the young, with that delicate humour which adds point and grace to kindly feelings. Even the parting letters which he dictated to his oldest friends when he felt his end near, show flashes of this rare quality. You felt that he saw clearly the frailties of human nature, but that he sympathised with them and forgave them. You felt that he loved youth and high spirits, and that his deepest pleasure was to witness and to promote happiness. Nothing ever clouded the serenity of his home, unless it were this, that the orphan and the unfortunate were constantly inmates of the house, where they found new parents and sure protectors. He had an open day in the week, when any of his young friends in college might come in to dinner without special invitation."

CHAPTER XXIII.

1864–1886.

FRIENDSHIPS WITH LIVING POETS.

"Nor is he far astray who deems
That every hope, which rises and grows broad
In the world's heart by ordered impulse, streams
From the great heart of God.

God wills, man hopes: in common souls
Hope is but vague and undefined,
Till from the poet's tongue the message rolls
A blessing to his kind."

—LOWELL.

SIR THEODORE MARTIN, a Scotsman by birth, though long resident in London, has been a man of letters from his youth. In conjunction with Professor Aytoun he wrote 'Bon Gaultier's Book of Ballads.' Its parodies of contemporary poets recall the wit and genial humour of 'Rejected Addresses.' Since then he has given us metrical translations of Horace and Catullus, has rendered the masterpieces of Goethe and Heine, Oehlenschlaeger and Hertz, Schiller and Uhland. Dante's 'Vita Nuova,' charmingly translated by him, is an admirable piece of work. So also are his dram-

atic criticisms in 'Essays on the Drama,' contributed originally to reviews and magazines. One of these, "The Drama in connexion with the Fine Arts," originally appeared in the 'Dublin University Magazine,' July 1846, and in this he expressed his admiration for Miss Helen Faucit's impersonation of Shakespeare's heroines.

This accomplished and gifted daughter of Erin—now Lady Martin—seems to have impressed her future husband chiefly by her rendering of the witty, womanly heroine of "As You Like It." Among his original poems is one addressed to Miss Faucit as Rosalind. It is an ardent and impassioned love-poem—a love afterwards sustained and intensified throughout a long and happy married life:—

TO MISS HELEN FAUCIT, AS ROSALIND.

"Blessings on the glorious spirit lies in poesy divine!
Blessings, lady, on the magic of that wondrous power of thine!
I have had a dream of summer, summer in the golden time,
When the heart had all its freshness and the world was in its prime;
I have been away in Arden, and I still am ranging there;
Still I feel the forest breezes fan my cheek and lift my hair;
Still I hear the stir and whisper which the arching branches make,
And the leafy stillness broken by the deer amid the brake!
Where along the wood the brooklet runs, upon its mossy brink,
Myself a stricken deer I've laid me, where the stricken came to drink.
There be Amiens and his co-mates, up, yon giant stems between,
Yonder, where the sun is shining 'neath the oak upon the green.
Hark! the throstle-cock is singing! and he turns his merry note,
Carolling in emulation of the sweet bird's joyous throat.

Lightly let them troll their wood-notes, fleet the careless time away,
What know they of love's emotion? No sweet Rosalind have they!
I will down by yonder dingle—none shall steal upon us there—
Heavenly, heavenly Rosalinda! Thou art with me everywhere!
Ever is thy voice beside me, ever on thy brow I gaze,
One such glorious dream about thee all the world beside outweigh
See, young Ganymede awaits me. Blessings on that roguish boy,
How he lightens my love's sadness with a sweet and pensive joy!
Yet the charms, the playful graces, that show bright in him, I find,
Only cluster round the image of my heavenly Rosalind.
So would Rosalind have won me,—so have looked and so have smiled,
With such blithe and open spirit me of all my heart beguiled.
Ever deeper grows my passion, restless more my eager heart—
'I can live no more by thinking, from my Rosalind apart!'
'Then to-morrow thou shalt see her, see her, wed her, if you will.'
Oh, ye gods, let that to-morrow shine in golden numbers still!
For it gave her to my bosom, and, at length, when there reclined,
By the proudest name I claimed her as my own, 'my Rosalind'!

Such, dear lady, was the vision, such the passion strong and deep,
Which thy magic wrought within me, laying meaner thoughts to sleep.
I have been the young Orlando, and though but a dream it were,
Never from my heart shall vanish what has struck so deeply there!"

After her marriage Lady Martin wrote on the characteristics of those among Shakespeare's women whom she had herself interpreted on the stage.

I have read the "Ophelia" [wrote Ferguson to Sir Theodore], and join my voice to the others advising that it should be published. I always thought the judgment that Ophelia is a "poor creature" superficial, and not what Shakespeare himself had in his mind. The great actor . . . is the interpreter most likely to be right. The view here taken of this character is certainly very natural, consistent, and engaging. I do not remember to have seen poor Ophelia's

excuse for the ditties she sings in her insanity suggested so prettily, or indeed at all, elsewhere. It pleased me very much. These characters of Shakespeare are capable of an infinite variety of presentation, according to the genius which takes them up. A man of penetrating judgment grasps the theory of Hamlet on paper, and delights us with the symmetry and cohesion of his exposition, but he has not realised it on the scene; and even though he be a Dowden, he cannot know the woman's part, as the woman does who has made Ophelia of herself.

And again in another letter Sir Samuel observes:—

We have been greatly interested in Lady Martin's Shakespearian character-analyses, especially in her "Juliet"; and I see in last month's 'Blackwood' a very just and appreciative notice of your own Horatian versions. I congratulate you both on the continued exercise of faculties so agreeable to yourselves and to others. I think the feat you have accomplished in the combined terseness and semi-grave pleasantry of some of your work is very remarkable.

In a letter written in acknowledgment of the 'Essays on the Drama,' Ferguson speaks thus of his friend's wife and of Professor Blackie, who had been introduced to him by Martin:—

I ought to address this letter of thanks for your 'Essays on the Drama' to Mrs Martin, for it is her inspiration that has produced it, though your kindness places it in my hands. What a noble creature! what gifts! I half regret that while others were enjoying those delights which you have commemorrated, in 1846, I was abroad, although seeing other sights also in their kind worthy of admiration. My wife has found the volume a source of great enjoyment, and often recurs to the justice of your views and the lamentable misapplication of the dramatic faculties both of authors and of audiences. She desires her special thanks; and we unite not only in this acknowledgment of our indebtedness to you, but

in thanks also for making us acquainted with your agreeable friend Professor Blackie. No one need desire to meet a more lively, fresh, and agreeable companion. He has read Froude, no doubt, and comes among us prepared to diagnose and possibly to prescribe. I fervently hope he may not write either article or book about us, but be content with imparting his gaiety and geniality in private, which indeed did us all here who came in contact with him a world of good; for we are grown morose, and by too much using of our wits have ceased to be witty. Yet if Blackie brings home with him the conviction which, every year I live, impresses itself more and more on my mind, that the Irish are bent on being "somebodies" in their own country, I would be half content to unsay what I have said, and to welcome the expression of it even among the gabble of the Magazines. But we really have a monstrous overdose of writing. I would not wonder if the upshot were, "all that we know is, nothing can be known. Pursue what"—the head of the Church—"proclaimeth best," and return to the repose of the old bondage. *Absit dies!* we will both concur in exclaiming, but to what ends may not the follies of political and social science lead a sentimental people!—Ever, dear Martin, very faithfully yours,

SAML. FERGUSON.

During his short visit to Dublin, Professor John Stuart Blackie had dined in Ferguson's house, and had enlivened the company by his originality, brilliant conversational powers, and vocal gifts. He was a Scotsman enthusiastically devoted to his country, many of his works being concerned with her literature. It is surprising how much he wrote on Scottish themes, considering that his course of studies as Professor of Humanity at Marischal College and of Greek at the University of Edinburgh were concerned with the classics, and that he had translated Æschylus and

Homer, and lectured on Plato and on Greek philology; and had also treated of the "War Songs" of the Germans, and translated 'Faust,' and written 'The Wisdom of Goethe.' Yet he was most at home in his 'Lays of the Highlands and Islands,' 'Scottish Highlanders,' 'Language and Literature of the Highlands of Scotland, and Metrical Translations of some of the most Popular Pieces of Gaelic Poetry.' Perhaps his greatest service was his successful effort to endow a Chair of Celtic Literature in the University of Edinburgh. For this object he raised a fund of £12,000. Ferguson, in sending him a subscription towards this endowment, wrote to Professor Blackie the following letter:—

20 NORTH GREAT GEORGE'S STREET, *May* 5, 1875.

MY DEAR SIR,—I enclose a contribution to your Celtic Chair. If my means were larger, my support would be more substantial. We have done our endeavour to found such a Chair here; but all things Celtic are regarded by our educated classes as of questionable *ton*, and an idea exists that it is inexpedient to encourage anything tending to foster Irish sentiment. The repugnance to the subject amongst English men of letters—from whom our upper classes have borrowed all they know or feel in the matter—is not unnatural. A man who fancies his education finished does not like to learn a new language and a new Classical Dictionary, with a view merely to the expression of critical opinion for an audience at present very limited in number, and probably better read in the subject than himself. Then there is a very prevalent feeling of mingled arrogance and apprehension which causes the common sort of editors and reviewers to revolt from the subject with a kind of loathing. The arrogance has been bred by an assiduous inculcation of the idea that there is a distinct population in these islands who are ethnologically superior to

the old native races, and (what is still less probable) that the bulk of the British population is of that blood. The apprehension, so far as it is not, in truth, an unconscious jealousy, springs, I imagine, from a dread lest the free people of these countries should be brought again under their old bondage to foreign ecclesiastical authority, a result to which the restoration of the Irish to any share of literary influence has been—in my mind, thoughtlessly—thought likely to conduce. In this state of things, a Chair, putting the subject on purely philological and scientific grounds, offers the most feasible means of winning the needful amount of attention and support. But it is not so much on this ground I offer my adhesion, as because I believe the great value of the study will ultimately be found to consist in the introduction of new material into the much triturated elements of our general literature. We are not in a condition to despise any accession of that kind from any quarter; and, after collecting all that can be gathered from abroad, ought rather to rejoice at the prospect of being able to turn, with an unexpected relish, to something still capable of being supplied at home. It is no answer to say these things are intrinsically jejune, or ugly, or barbarous. You will probably agree with me that much of the material of the best classic literature is as crude and revolting as anything in Irish or in Welsh story. Raw material, however, to be converted to the uses of cultivated genius, is not all that we might reasonably hope for from such sources. There are ways of looking at things, and even of expressing thought, in these deposits of old experience, not to be lightly rejected by a generation whose minds are restless with unsatisfied speculation, and the very clothing of whose ideas begins to show the polish of threadbareness as much as of culture.

Are, then, the obstructions indicated in the first part of this letter insurmountable? I will tell you why I think not. Our upper classes in this part of the kingdom, if they would not see themselves entirely excluded from local power and consideration, must place themselves to some—I wish I could say to some further—extent in sympathy with the bulk of the people; and it is easier and more probable that this con-

formity should take place in the direction of literary and intellectual harmony. Next, if I rightly apprehend the course of ethnological and philological inquiry, it goes, with an accelerating progress, towards the Britannicising of our theories of origin in race and institutions, and even to some extent in language. Thirdly, the dread of a reaction in religious thought no longer looks for the coming mischief from the solid-minded Irish peasant, but from the inconstant leaders themselves of the Anglo-Saxon world of fashion and refinement. There remain, then, only the latent sentiment referred to, and the aversion from the trouble of learning; and these are minor obstacles which, if left unsupported, must vanish before such a measure of success as will probably, in any case, attend the project undertaken by a man of your capacity.—I remain, very faithfully yours, SAML. FERGUSON.

Professor Blackie died, at the ripe age of eighty-five, on the 2d of March 1895. His Biography, from the pen of Miss Stoddart, has been recently published by Mr Blackwood of Edinburgh.

I ought to have acknowledged your most welcome letter many days ago [wrote Martin in acknowledgment of Ferguson's 'Lays of the Western Gael']. Nothing but an extreme pressure of work, which has sent me home utterly exhausted day after day, has prevented me. I read your beautiful verses at once, and have read them more than once since, with very great pleasure. They are like all I know of yours, like good strong wine, full of glow and fragrance. Your discoveries are very curious. What do the learned in such matters say to these singular characters?

Do not forget to include us in your summer plans [wrote Mrs Martin to Ferguson in 1869]. At present we do not know when we shall be able to go to Wales, but we hope it will be early in the summer. We lately were invited to Osborne for five days, which by the Queen's wish was extended to a week. On this occasion all passed off happily, and we enjoyed our visit

very much. The Queen is always most gracious and sweet to us, and the Royal children are clever and very interesting—all those I have seen. The Princess Louise is peculiarly graceful and unaffected, but Mr Martin says the Crown Princess of Prussia, whom I have not yet seen, is a remarkable woman—quite the flower of the family. We are invited to stay with her in her Palace at Berlin some time next winter. Mr Martin tells me I shall be charmed with her: with the intellect of a man she has the heart of a child.

I thank you now, but I ought to have thanked you sooner, for the Prologue in verse you sent me to the last three acts of "Cymbeline." I have not been well lately, or I hope I should not have been so remiss. This play, beautiful as it is, to our modern ideas is a little unhappy in the story, especially when read in a small circle. It was a happy idea of yours in your pleasant rhymes thus to skim over the story of the wager in the first two, to give Shakespeare's own version of the last three lovely acts. The fourth is a perfect idyl, and might stand alone; and yet, like everything in Shakespeare, is only known best, and in its true significance, when attached to the rest of the story. I sometimes think Imogen was my favourite of Shakespeare's great women; and yet I never like to say so—each is so distinct, and all so real and so womanly.

I should have liked much to have been at that famous reading. The names of the readers are vouchers for the high intelligence brought to the task. . . .

Will you and Mrs Ferguson accept our cordial greetings and regards? and believe me ever, in true friendship, sincerely yours, HELENA F. MARTIN.

In reference to his translation of a portion of the Second Part of 'Faust' Mr Martin observed:—

I would fain have done the whole poem could I have found leisure; but the task demanded much more time and labour than I could give to it, and I feared that, after all, it would be labour thrown away, so few people feel an interest in this part of the great work. You will find I have translated the whole of the classical "Walpurgis Night," and of the "Helena,"

and I should be very glad to have at your leisure your opinion of my work. Some day I cherish the hope of being able to resume and complete it. Before writing to my publisher to send it to you, I should like to know whether I sent you my version of Dante's 'Vita Nuova,' which I think about the best thing in the way of translation I ever did; because if not, I should like at the same time to send you a copy of that also. . . .

We had to make a journey to Birmingham for the Musical Festival, from which we returned on Saturday saturated with "sounds and sweet noises," which gave us intense delight, but rather "hurt" us by the strain upon the brain which four magnificent oratorios performed to perfection, and much other high-class music, were calculated to produce. I had never before a conception of what Music could do, and what a Jove among musicians Handel is. . . .

We hope you have felt much the better for your run into Warwickshire. Is not Stratford and all round it delightful?

Our kindest greetings to Mrs Ferguson. It was very hard I could see so little of you. Mrs Martin was greatly pleased to have been more fortunate. — Ever, my dear Ferguson, sincerely yours, THEODORE MARTIN.

The most important literary work of Theodore Martin was one requiring tact, taste, and judgment, all of which he possesses in a high degree. He wrote at the request of Queen Victoria 'The Life of the late Prince Consort.' Both the widowed Queen and the public pronounced it to be admirably done. It brought him the recognition of Knighthood and the friendship of the Royal Family.

Ferguson wrote to Martin in March 1878, in commendation of his rendering of "The Slave-Ship," which appeared about this time in 'Blackwood':—

I give you joy of "The Slave-Ship," which I have just read

with admiration. I don't know the original, but you have produced a combination of grotesqueness and pathos wonderfully striking in your English. . . .

Mrs Martin would find some lamentable gaps in the old familiar circle if she were here. Tell her, with my kindest regards, that we often speak of her, and always "with sweet affection and recollection."

Foremost among the poets still living to uphold the fame of Ireland as the Land of Song is Mr Aubrey de Vere. Of him Ferguson wrote:—

> De Vere possessed the art
> To touch, nor wound, the generous English heart.
> With words of strength and clearness to express
> The power of purity and manliness.

His genius is hereditary. His father, Sir Aubrey de Vere, author of many lyrics and sonnets, and of a noble drama, 'Mary Tudor,' has left behind him sons who inherit his poetic gifts. Sir Stephen has translated the Odes of Horace, and Aubrey is the author of 'The Search after Proserpine,' 'May Carols,' 'Inisfail,' 'The Legends of Saint Patrick,' 'The Foray of Queen Maeve,' 'Legends of the Saxon Saints,' 'Legends and Records of the Church and the Empire, 'Mediæval Records and Sonnets'; and two dramas, 'Alexander the Great' and 'Saint Thomas of Canterbury'; also in prose, 'Literary and Critical Essays,' some of these dealing with Politics and Theology.

Mr Aubrey de Vere's best work is consecrated to his native land. His 'Foray of Queen Maeve' is dedicated to "Sir Samuel Ferguson in token of grati-

tude for 'Congal,' and for many poems besides, that illustrate aright the Legends of Ancient Ireland."

"The child is father to the man,"

and Mr de Vere has told how, as a child, sailing with his father on the estuary of the Shannon, that parent pointed to Knock Patrick, "and told us how from its summit Ireland's great apostle had sent his benediction over all the lands to the south and west."

Thus early interested, the poet in mature life wrote his 'Legends of Saint Patrick,' and dwelt much in his preface on that apostle's method :—

As legislator St Patrick waged no needless war against the ancient laws of Ireland. He purified them, and he amplified them, discarding only what was unfit for a nation made Christian. Thus was produced the great 'Book of the Law' or 'Senchus Mohr,' compiled A.D. 439.

The Irish people received the Gospel gladly. . . . It had created among them an exquisite appreciation of the beautiful, the pathetic, and the pure. The early Irish chronicles, as well as songs, show how strong among them that sentiment had ever been. . . . That early civilisation was a memorable thing; and when submitted to the Christian law, it did great things. It sheltered a high virtue at home, and evangelised a great part of Northern Europe. . . .

If the Ireland of early times is ever understood, it will not be till after thoughtful men have deemed her legends worthy of their serious attention. But it is for the lover of poetry that the early Irish legends have most immediate interest. They are poetical because they deal frankly with those vehement emotions of a nation's youth which, like the gestures of children, are cramped by no restraint. They have neither the open nor the veiled coarseness. They delight in illustrating human affections *in all their forms.*

Ferguson wrote of his friend's work :—

Mr de Vere moves, indeed, with an ample and easy gesture, and at times uplifts an almost irradiated brow as he follows the spiritual sower casting abroad the seeds of the faith among savage clans, and over wildernesses still the haunt of demons. Patrick has come among the men of Focluth, the woody region in Tirawley, from whence he had first heard the call of the Irish children. He tells his hearers of hell and heaven, of sin and of salvation.

> "The wondrous tale complete,
> Not sudden fell the silence; for, as when
> A huge wave, forth from ocean toiling, mounts
> High arched in solid bulk the beach rock-strewn,
> Burying his hoar head under echoing cliffs,
> And, after pause, refluent to sea returns,
> Not all at once is stillness, countless rills
> Or devious winding down the steep, or borne
> In crystal leap from sea-shelf to sea-wall,
> And sparry grot replying; gradual thus,
> With lessening cadence, sank the great discourse."

Here, with perfect appositeness, every feature in turn connects itself with the successions of emotion. The image everywhere reinforces the action, furnishing the mind with sights and sounds proper to every part of it, and, that done, leaves it to proceed, illustrated, not interrupted; illuminated, not—may we be pardoned for saying—bedizened. To what are we to ascribe the superior directness, apart from excellence of finish, which distinguishes the work of the Irish artist. We think it probable that remoteness from the centre of criticism and independence of what is called literary opinion may go some way to account for the difference.

Mr de Vere and Sir Samuel Ferguson, from their different standpoints, were alike interested in the career and character of the Apostle of Ireland. Ferguson, as a very young man, had, in his "Return of

Claneboy," an historic tale in 'Hibernian Nights' Entertainments,' dwelt on the personality of Saint Patrick, and in advanced life he translated into English blank verse the 'Confessio,' and 'Epistle to Coroticus,' considered by scholars to be his authentic writings, and containing much of his autobiography. "This most remarkable work," wrote the late Bishop of Meath (Dr Reichel), gives "a more comprehensible and a juster representation, especially of the 'Confession,' than any prose translation could do."

My dear de Vere [wrote Ferguson in July 1875 of Sir Aubrey's drama],—'Mary Tudor' has been in our bookcase, and often in our hands, especially in those of my wife, since it was first published. It is a dramatic poem in contrast with the historical or didactic poem put in form of a drama. It moves and transacts itself by sympathy and emotion, where other pieces transact themselves through exposition and discourse. I do not like the subject nor the reflections the subject excites at the present time. But this is not the fault of the author, who probably little thought that the subject would so soon be taken out of the sphere of retrospect and made subservient to present politics.

Both in your writings and those of your father I am charmed with the lyrics. The chant over King Edward's bier in 'Mary Tudor' is very sweet, solemn, and composing. They are great events, too, that cross the stage, and men of action in their speech as well as in the stage-direction. But I suppose the play would not act. This, however, my want of dramatic sympathy—I suppose—prevents my judging of.

We greatly regretted when in London not finding you, and would receive you with open arms here if we should have returned from our vacation when you shall next pass through. . . . God bless you meanwhile, whether you sing

or pray, and put in your heart to sing things sweet, genial, and Irish of the Irish, as I once ventured to interpret the words.—Affectionately yours, SAML. FERGUSON.

The letter about to be given refers to a reading of 'Mary Tudor' which the Fergusons arranged and carried into effect during Mr de Vere's stay in Dublin. The author's son elected to interpret the character of Cardinal Pole, Mrs Ferguson that of the English Queen. Miss Laura Darley and Miss Henrietta Guinness rendered those of the Princess Elizabeth and Lady Jane Grey. Lord Emly, and his son the Hon. Gaston Monsell, Lord O'Hagan, Judge O'Hagan, Mr Edward Murray, Ferguson, &c., rendered other characters in the play. The drama 'Mary Tudor' is finely conceived, and was effectively delivered. Its success as a reading play could not fail to gratify the author's son.

CURRAGH CHASE, ADARE, *May* 16, 1877.

MY DEAR MRS FERGUSON,—I am so much obliged to you for your friendly letter. You may be sure that when I am going to Dublin (if I can stay there more than a few hours) I will write to find out whether you are still there. I will try to bring up a copy or two of 'Mary Tudor,' though I should much rather be a listener at the reading than a reader myself. I fear, however, that I shall not be in town till some time in June, when you may have fled. . . .

When will your husband give us another "Congal"? It is the best contribution yet made to our slender stores of Irish history in the form poetic. Ireland alone ought to have exhausted three editions of it before now. If he has not his *proper place* (much and largely as his poetry is admired by the "fit and few"), you must console yourself (as I do

when I remember how neglected my father's poetry has been) by humming Canning's song—

> "Praise to placeless proud ability
> Let the prudent muse disclaim"—

written when Pitt was out of power and mediocrity was in high places.—Yours very sincerely, AUBREY DE VERE.

A letter from Ferguson to de Vere in March 1881 shows that the latter was looking up material for his 'Foray of Queen Maeve,' published the following year, 1882. In its preface Mr de Vere observes of his correspondent: "How entirely early Irish legends are susceptible of a high poetic rendering in our own day can be doubted by no one who has read the poems founded on them which we owe to the genius of Sir Samuel Ferguson."

MY DEAR DE VERE,—The best translation I know of the "Tain" is O'Curry's. It is, I believe, the property of the Archæological and Celtic Society, of which the Bishop of Limerick and Mr Gilbert are Hon. Secretaries. . . . Professor O'Looney has made, I believe, another translation of the "Tain." The Academy was to have published it, but after printing a few sheets we had to give it up, owing to non-progress in the correction of proofs. . . .

The late Denis H. Kelly of Castle Kelly also translated the "Tain." He wrote English like a gentleman and man of taste, but may not have been as accurate as the others. He lent his MS. to Lady Ferguson, who made some extracts from it. I do not know who is his legal representative; but Mr Henry West, Q.C., Loughlinstown, Dublin, his son-in-law, would give you all information.

Standish O'Grady, Barrister-at-Law, has, I fancy, made some use of a MS. translation at the Academy, of which he will, I am sure, be happy to give you particulars. I do not know it myself.

I am glad the subject attracts your attention, and will be better pleased still if you will come and study it at 20 North Great George's Street. We shall be here for the next two months, and there will be a bedroom and study at your disposal.—Yours, my dear de Vere, with affectionate goodwill, SAML. FERGUSON.

In acknowledgment of de Vere's 'Queen Maeve' Ferguson wrote:—

I have read the volume with the greatest interest and pleasure,—the interest enhanced by a knowledge of the difficulties you have had to deal with, and the pleasure great in proportion to the success I see you have attained to in overcoming them. You have had fewest difficulties of matter in the Children of Lir, and have made of it a truly lovely poem-romance. I think its natural and its religious tenderness more touching than even the most pathetic part of the "Tain." I could not attempt such a scene as the Ferdiah combat—I would break down under the sense of pity. I suppose there is no other situation so touching in old story. That of the two Scotch youths set on by their fathers to the duel comes nearest to it in ballad poetry; but it wants the grandeur and the great interests in the background. I am half doubtful of the *gae bulga*, but you have faced your difficulty like a man, and on the whole acted judiciously in doing so. The fight is preternatural in its devotion, and its demands on endurance and vitality, and required some wonder for its solution. There is a tradition at Stamworth Bridge, where they celebrate a commemoration of the defeat of the Danes called the "pear"-pie feast, that the leader of the invaders was slain while standing on the open wood-work of the bridge by a weapon floated down the river of a pear-shape. Is it the same old tradition in the British and the Irish Saga, drawn from some common original in the recesses of the morning of history? I think it is in a note to 'Ivanhoe,' in one of the editions of Scott, I have seen the story. You were right also, I think, to introduce the Mor Ringan and her eel—

another actor, I do not doubt, in the old story of the wars of the gods of a lost Pantheon. All about the "Tain" calls up greatness of thought and of impression, and you keep to the heroic stature of your subject. You have been more conscientious than I in your treatment of the Sons of Usnach. I always thought the version in the Iberno-Celtic Society's 'Proceedings' better than that in the 'Atlantis,' and am glad that you work on the former. It will give me true pleasure if these graceful, dignified, and harmonious poems receive the applauses they deserve.

When the extension of the franchise shifted the balance of power from the trained, educated, and propertied classes to the inexperienced and ignorant masses, who contribute little or nothing towards the burdens of the State, although their votes—numerically greater—have made them its masters, Mr de Vere seems to have realised how unjust as well as dangerous was the situation. He probably wrote to Ferguson on the question of Proportionate Representation, which drew from the latter this rejoinder:—

18*th Feb.* 1885.

My dear de Vere,—I find it difficult to grasp the subject in all its bearings. The problem seems to be to find a small body which shall represent a very great one in as many of its details as possible. It is fairly right that we should aim at such a representation of the Commons, but how this is to be accomplished is the question. If the three Kingdoms formed one constituency the minority would have no representation at all, and twenty millions should submit to the rule of twenty millions and one. The more numerous the constituencies the less the danger of this result, because some districts are exceptions to the generally "liberal" character of the populace. But more than five or six hundred men cannot take counsel together in one place, and unless the representa-

tives be delegates only, commissioned to vote as directed, and incapable of deliberation, this seems to fix the limits of the constituencies. In six hundred districts there will be some approach to perfect proportionate representation, but it will be as six hundred to the entire electorate. In any device to reduce this disparity a principle must be affirmed to the effect that in every (two, three, four, or more) constituencies the minority may elect a member of their own, which involves an empirical determination of the two, three, four, &c., and makes any agreement of parties on this fundamental postulate impossible. No, my dear de Vere, I see but one key to the lock, and that not one to be hoped for—namely, elective right, contribution to the burdens of the State, votes proportionate to each man's taxes, and, if you will, to make an end of changes, universal suffrage.

The electoral pack has been swelled by the introduction of such an addition of non-court cards that, shuffle them as we may, we never can hold the same hands again. Farewell.—Ever yours, SAML. FERGUSON.

A few extracts from Mr de Vere's published essay, "Proportionate Representation considered with reference to the Idea involved in it," will explain his views. They are given from his 'Essays,' 1889:—

The question of Proportionate Representation—although, owing to an accidental combination of circumstances, it may seem for the moment to be disposed of—is certain to recur; for to England its importance must ever increase, and to Ireland it is a question of life or death. . . . A very low franchise taken by itself obviously threatens the practical disfranchisement of whole classes and vast national interests; but it need not be taken by itself. It admits and demands various compensations and modifications. A share in the franchise is not by necessity an equal share. Voters possessing larger intelligence than others, or larger property, and remoter as well as larger interests in the national wellbeing,

might be endowed with a double vote; or a second franchise, restricted however to the election of a limited number of representatives, might be created for the protection of interests otherwise unrepresented. . . . The minority in one district and the majority in another may be in harmony so far as adhesion or opposition to a particular political party goes, and yet the more intimate conviction and ardent aspiration of the one may be wholly unshared by the other. . . .

National representation, then, when contemplated in the light of an idea, means the proportionate representation both of a nation's majorities and larger minorities throughout the whole country, not chiefly to adjust the relations of parliamentary parties, but for the purpose of eliciting the intelligence and maturing the wisdom of a nation. . . . The wrong done to the local minority, when deliberately left unrepresented, is a twofold wrong: it is the expansion of that injury inflicted on the sacred right of each individual, thus amerced of a right conferred on him by his country; it is also the image in miniature of the injury done to the total country in which that conscientious public opinion, which ought to have grown up and become the nation's guide, is murdered before its birth. To deny that numbers alone are to rule is not to affirm that civil position and privilege alone are to rule; the qualifications to rule wisely and justly are essentially moral qualifications demanded and imparted by nature, and recognised, not created, by convention. So long as the qualities which naturally lead to eminence survive in sequent generations of men placed high, their claims to power, though not to exclusive power, survive also, because their powers to serve the nation survive. . . .

Give us what will raise the masses, not pull down those who have won for themselves, or honourably preserved as their inheritance, the natural rewards of superior intellect, courage, and perseverance,—rewards, however, which ought to be open to all. Improve the condition of those who still remain on the lowest step of the social ladder, and remove all obstacles from those whom nature has qualified to rise to the highest. Give us a parliamentary system which will not set

class against class, but which will prove the perpetual educator of a people. . . . For [Ireland] Proportionate Representation is even more necessary than for any other part of the empire. The alternative is a demoralisation fatal alike to her spiritual and temporal interests.

Ferguson turned his thoughts to the subject, and worked out the problem thus:—

If it were desired that a Representative Chamber should be an exact reflection of the opinions of the voting electorate, that object might be attained *quam proxime* by a method the chief features in which would be open voting, a general constituency, and successive elections. In the exposition following, the expressions "candidature" will be used as comprising the whole list of unelected candidates, and "disappointees" in reference to voters, as including all whose votes are given either superfluously or ineffectively; and, in reference to candidates, as including both the unsuccessful and those set aside, as hereinafter mentioned:—

1. Take a primary election for the full number of seats, each voter having one vote for any one name in the candidature.

2. Ascertain the proportion which the whole number of voting disappointees bears to the whole number of voters; and from the gross return set aside such a number of those having the smaller majorities as will bear that proportion to the full list. The remainder to stand, and their electors to retire and not vote again.

3. Next, take a secondary election for the seats so vacated, the electorate and candidature to consist of the primary voting and competing disappointees.

4. Ascertain the proportion of the secondary voting disappointees to the secondary voters, and set aside a proportionate number of the secondary returns. The rest to stand, and the voters electing them to retire, as before.

5. A third election to be then taken on the same principles, in which the doubly disappointed voters should elect from amongst the doubly disappointed candidates; and so on, till

the number of voting disappointees becomes less than the number representing one seat. With the exception of this *residuum*, every voter will then have been effectively instrumental in the return of one representative of his choice; no vote will have been thrown away; and the Chamber will be an almost exact reflection in miniature of the mind of the electorate.

My dear de Vere [wrote Sir Samuel in January 1886], —I am sitting up and writing in my bedroom for the first time after a severe three weeks' illness. Your letter gratifies me greatly, and your brother's Horatian versions open to me a view of the diversities of language which has occupied my thoughts, though languidly, most part of the day. Each language seems to have its own jewels which cannot be reproduced. The thoughts can be expressed, but in a medium which must necessarily ally itself with it in different accommodations. It is evident that the clothing has its part as well as the substance. Carlyle's vanity and arrogance led him to affect contempt for these outsides. He would not have got his own thoughts received so favourably as they were if their outsides had not been well coloured, and their motions, in their own harsh way, musical. If all the earth were of one tongue, and under one rule, we should have free trade and doubtless all blessings, but a great limitation of marrying thoughts to words.

This letter was never completed. On the same sheet of paper was scribbled in pencil a translation of "Mæcenas atavis," "the closest packed of the Horatian Odes. Here, in the compass of six-and-thirty lines of twelve syllables, Horace presents the leading pursuits of the life of his day. . . . Any merit the present version can pretend to consists in its conciseness, being exactly of equal syllabic length with the original."

The translated Ode appeared as a postscript to the article in 'Blackwood' on "Sir Samuel Ferguson," November 1886. Its concluding lines are these:—

Me
A wreath from Learning's ivy-tree
Makes equal with the gods above;
Me the cool grot, the silent grove,
And dances light of Nymph and Faun,
Keep separate and far withdrawn
From sordid crowds and wealth's pursuit,
Let but Euterpe fetch her flute,
Nor Polyhymnia stint her lyre;
But rank me in the sacred quire
Of Lyric Poets, and I rise
With loftier head, and touch the skies

When the early spring-time came, Ferguson left his home for change of air, never to return in life. A small house at Howth, as close to the sea as it is possible for a house to be, was rented, and he was moved to Strand Lodge by slow stages. It was close to Marine Cottage, where he had spent the summer of 1860, and had addressed the letter to his mother which describes the prospect from the field in front of both houses, then and always delightful to him. But as his weakness increased he was unable to leave his room. His days were passed on a sofa in the bow-window of this chamber, which projected over the sea and commanded a view of the little island of St Nessan,—Ireland's Eye; its name a corruption of the Norse *ey* or islet. He enjoyed the scene to the last, and tranquilly, and even cheerfully, awaited the approach of

death, solicitous chiefly for others, and exhorting his wife to face her impending solitary fate with courage and resignation.

Two letters from Mr de Vere will close their correspondence:—

My dear Lady Ferguson,—I am indeed most truly grateful to you for the letter which you have written to me at so trying a time at the wish of your dear husband, who will ever have a place among those near and dear friends who, though I can hope no more to see them on earth, yet for ever live on in my recollections and my prayers. He was one of those gentle and benignant spirits our memories of whom are memories of peace, and in thinking of whom we are drawn away from this lower world of confusions and distractions into a higher and serener region, one of quiet and of hope. He gave his genius to high and noble ends, the illustration of that great and pathetic Past, which will become more and more precious to all those who love Ireland with a worthy love, as he did!—more precious in proportion as her present and future are disturbed and dark. This was true service; and Ireland will learn with the years to distinguish true service which is self-repaid, and that false service which seeks repayment in the acclamations of the crowd.

His life must surely have been a very happy one; and it is a real joy to me to learn from you that his death was full of peace. To you it must be the greatest consolation, next to the hope of rejoining him in a happier world, to know that you were allowed to minister to him so much of that happiness which was his in life, and that consolation which remained with him at his close. I am most grateful to you for what you tell me of his feelings towards myself, and his sympathy with my attempt to follow his example in the way of illustrating our country's annals. He is gathered to a goodly group of friends who were united in that labour of love: I often thought of him (when all hope of his recovery had ceased) as dying near "Aideen's Grave," a spot which will ever be associated with

him, and which I hope to visit for the first time when I am next in Dublin, and visit it with many affectionate thoughts, you may be sure, of him, for his friendship was very much to me. Once more receive my best thanks, and may God grant you soon that true consolation which He alone can bestow. —Believe me, ever most sincerely yours,

AUBREY DE VERE.

MY DEAR LADY FERGUSON,—Your kind letter is much more than a return for the one to which it was an answer, and it has interested me very much.

I received the two Dublin papers, and read with emotion and satisfaction also all that they contained respecting my old friend. I was glad that the Archbishop preached on the occasion of the funeral, and thought his sermon full of appreciation. I am still more pleased to hear that he was laid in his grave by his old friend Dr Reeves, so able and devoted a fellow-labourer with him in the field of ancient Irish lore. I wish that his grave could have been at Howth, which will always be associated with his memory; but it was right that it should be among the graves of his kindred and forefathers. That sonnet by R. P. Graves is a very touching and beautiful one. The incidents recorded in it were well worth recording; and it must be a satisfaction to you to have such a memento.

If you are still at Howth when I return, I will remind you of your promise to bring me to "Aideen's Grave."

I do hope you will bring out a popular edition of your husband's works. Their day will come, when the follies of this day are passed away.—Believe me most sincerely yours,

AUBREY DE VERE.

Of the younger poets for whom Ferguson felt both interest and hope, a few may be briefly mentioned. Miss A. L. Hildebrand is the author of 'Western Lyrics' and 'Lays from the Land of the Gael.' The last-named volume contains some lines, full of poetic fire and enthusiasm, on a portrait of Clarence Mangan

taken after death by Sir F. W. Burton. This sketch of one so unhappy in life, so placid on his pillow, after life's fitful fever sleeping well, with the rapture of repose on his finely chiselled features, is now in the National Gallery of Dublin.

A few stanzas from Miss Hildebrand's poem will show how touchingly it appealed to her compassionate woman's heart:—

"I kneel before thee, as before
Some pallid, martyred saint,
And muse thy chequered story o'er,
With anguished heart and faint;
To think of all the sorrow prest
Into one fated human breast.

. . . . .

Yes, lofty soul, in prison pent,
Behind those prison bars,
A glorious liberty was lent
And converse with the stars,
For gazing on thy pale dead face
A strange, mysterious joy I trace.

. . . . .

Farewell! if on that mystic coast,
Where shadowy martyrs be,
My voice can reach thy mournful ghost,
Accept this strain from me;
Know that thy face in Death's repose
Tells to my soul thy soul's deep woes."

Of Miss Hildebrand Ferguson thought highly. He showed her much practical kindness, giving counsel and aid in the steps so difficult to a young writer for securing the favourable consideration of a pub-

lisher. He introduced her to his friend, Canon MacIlwaine, then engaged in bringing out the 'Lyra Hibernica Sacra,' whose valuable assistance smoothed away many obstacles. Miss Hildebrand felt that she had lost a true friend when Ferguson was taken. She has described his gracious and kindly character in the following lines:—

ON THE RECEIPT OF SIR SAMUEL FERGUSON'S PORTRAIT.

NOVEMBER 14, 1886.

"Meek face and pure that even here
The impress of the heavenly wears,
O tell me, is't by Faith or Prayers,
Or by the love that knows not fear,
Man cometh the Unseen so near,
His foot doth tread God's shining stairs,
And Mortal with the Immortal shares,
Yet counts all human friendship dear?
For this was in thee—sympathy most sweet,
The kindly eye that all it looks on blesses,
The tender heart whose very smile caresses,
Good measure running over, some souls mete
The life that knew thee best, this truth confesses,
What needs the muse thy virtues to repeat."

A graceful little note addressed to Ferguson by Miss Katharine Tynan—who, as Mrs Hinkson, has since done acceptable work both in prose and verse—accompanied the presentation of that lady's earliest volume:—

The writer of the accompanying little volume of verse, 'Louise de la Vallière, and other Poems,' offers it very humbly

to Sir Samuel Ferguson, praying him to accept it as a tribute of homage to the first living Irish poet from the youngest and least. If he should find anything in those poor first-fruits of hers to give him pleasure or to deserve his praise, the writer would feel very proud and very happy.

To this Ferguson replied as follows:—

The poems are full of feeling and refinement. I have read them with emotion and pleasure. They are of a higher mood than any I have hitherto seen having the same aims, and ought to make your voice influential among the better spirits of that section of our countrymen with whom you sympathise. You will, I think, be stronger in proportion as you are more direct, and avoid the use of what are called pet words.

I am greatly taken with your "Bird on the Frosty Branch"; you are very happy in your bird imagery and sympathies.

In Mrs Hinkson's subsequent writings, her love for birds and animals shows strongly as ever. It has inspired her poems "St Francis to the Birds," and "Sheep and Lambs," and "The Gardener Sage," who asserts of the crow that he "counts the days of the week and keeps the Sabbath-day."

E. D. W., author of a modest little volume entitled 'Verses,' published in 1876 by E. Ponsonby, 116 Grafton Street, Dublin, is a lady well known and much esteemed in literary circles in the Irish capital. She is a daughter of the late Dean of St Patrick's. Miss West's book is to some extent a self-revelation; the sonnets it contains are introspective. They abound in tender descriptions of scenery — sea and

sky and mountain. They illustrate the truth which Coleridge has so impressively uttered:—

> "Lady! we receive but what we give,
> And in our life alone does nature live."

Nor is Miss West a stranger to

> "That blessed mood,
> In which the burthen of the mystery,
> In which the heavy and the weary weight
> Of all this unintelligible world
> Is lightened; . . .
> While with an eye made quiet by the power
> Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
> We see into the life of things."

A few stanzas from Miss West's poem "September" may illustrate her power of depicting a hillside clothed with blossoming gorse and heather:—

> "Again the lucid deep September haze
> Trembles in morning hours; around me plays
> (Intangible as half-felt dream that weighs
> In coming sleep) the memory of a blaze
> That somewhere on a far-off hillside blends
>
> Its purple reds with flakes of green and gold
> From a deep furze and heather sea, out rolled
> In radiant calm amid soft mists that fold
> Its limits round, aglow as if no cold
> Or darkness ever had been, nor could be.
> . . . . . .
> Come there not now, although *that* ecstasy
> Was transient likewise, gracious years when we
> May find our portion 'mid the things that be
> No loans from joy, but perpetuity
> Of fair sad happiness, grave equal faith?

> In surest comradeship of heart and mind,
> That needs not memory's sweetnesses to bind
> Its constancies—enough one tie to find—
> Brave human help exchanged, to face with blind
> Stern hopefulness all mysteries of death."

Miss West has recently—December 1895—become the wife of Professor Edward Dowden, a man of accomplishment and culture, who published in 1876 a volume of 'Poems.' These were largely concerned with classical subjects. "The Heroines" of whom he treats are Helena, Atalanta, Europa, Andromeda, and Eurydice. "In the Galleries" he describes the Apollo, and the Venus of Melos. Professor Dowden, like Shelley and Wordsworth, has been enraptured by the skylark's melody. He has meditated "By the Sea" and "In the Garden"; and the "Inner Life" of the contemplative soul has been dwelt on in his musings. But it is as a prose-writer and lecturer that Professor Dowden has achieved his highest success. His critical study of the greatest poet of all time, 'Shakspere, his Mind and his Art,' is a most satisfying book. Its substance was delivered in the form of lectures at Alexandra College, Dublin. It has gone through several editions. It is luminous, for Professor Dowden goes to the very heart of his theme, with insight and critical penetration.

In his 'Life of Shelley' Professor Dowden has made admirable use of the material placed in his hands by the family of that great poet, who in his brief tenure of life—thirty years only—enriched our literature with exquisite lyrics. It was a difficult task to write the

life of one so interesting, dowered with charm and genius, yet so devoid of sound principle. To have known Shelley only as a poet, and to have remained ignorant of his errors as a man, would have been preferable. Dr Dowden has, however, accomplished his difficult task with tact and delicacy. "I have reserved from the reader," he writes, "nothing that concerns Shelley. I have endeavoured to search out the truth in many quarters, and to tell the whole truth as far as it is known to me."

George Francis Savage-Armstrong, now Professor of English Literature at Queen's College, Cork, as Dr Dowden is in Trinity College, Dublin, was a youthful aspirant to fame when first known to Ferguson. Now, matured in mind, and author of many volumes of verse—'Ugone,' 'The Tragedy of Israel,' 'A Garland from Greece,' 'Stories of Wicklow,' 'One in the Infinite'—Professor Savage-Armstrong has proved himself a poet of great versatility, and in his satire 'Mephistopheles in Broadcloth' a master of irony. The Devil of Marlowe and of Goethe is assumed to be a sojourner in London during the season of 1888, and is described as visiting the House of Commons, the theatres, exhibitions, and parks. He takes a chair in Rotten Row from whence to moralise on the passers-by.

> "The world, I find, on looking round about me,
> Goes to the Devil very well without me,"

is his conclusion after this inspection of fashionable London.

Mephistopheles enlarges on the literary decadence of the age, and the cliques of poetasters, who

> "Never yet, for all their toil and dole,
> Have touched the springs of any human soul,"

and

> "Would not know a poem if they saw it."

The sceptical conversation of some scientific men, who boast that modern science has abolished Hell, the Devil, and the Lord of Hosts, is commented on. Mephistopheles asks—

> "Nay, I am Evil, I am Anarchy,
> I am Confusion—have ye conquered *me?*"

The decadence of Art is thus touched on :—

> "'O Art, Art, Art,' I cried, 'I feel indeed
> Thou satisfiest my spiritual need!
> Farewell all dreams of Heaven, all childish cults!
> This is the true Religion—for adults!'
> Fools! . . . Art, to gratify the Spirit's yearning,
> Itself must from the Spirit's yearning spring.
> With all their marvellous skill, *technique*, and learning,
> Your modern artists paint no noble thing."

This new departure of a poet whose pen had hitherto been mainly occupied with lovely and peaceful scenes of Nature, suggests saddening thoughts to those who reflect on what has "tamed great nations." It is an evidence, however, of the versatility of the writer who could so lash the follies of the day and yet evoke the tenderer emotions of the heart by a narrative direct and simple as that of "The Fisherman" in 'Stories of Wicklow.' Its pathos is such that it can hardly be read without tears. But the poem is too long for quotation.

Professor Savage-Armstrong received from Lady Ferguson some criticisms on her husband's poetry which had appeared anonymously in the 'University Magazine,' October 1872, and in the 'Catholic World' of New York, July 1879. A few extracts from these will explain the allusions in the following letters.

The review of 1872 speaks of Ferguson's work as "instinct with poetic vigour, raciness, picturesqueness," and enlarges on the "enthralling magic spell" of "The Fairy Thorn." The writer speaks of "the comprehensive grasp of his intellect; of his wealth of poetic imagery, and the ease with which he could harmonise modes of native thought and native expression with the march of heroic verse"; and says of "Congal" that an "important event in early Irish history is presented to public attention invested with all the attractions which powerful and romantic interest, truth of local colour, and poetry of the highest order can impart."

The American reviewer wrote in the same tone:—

> If the spirit of the ancient bardic poetry of Ireland is to live at all to the general reader, it will do so in the poem of "Congal," and Sir Samuel Ferguson has worthily crowned a literary life, so brilliantly begun, with a noble and conscientious work, which will illustrate his country's genius as well as his own.

> I return, with very many thanks for the pleasure and advantage I have derived from their perusal [wrote Professor Armstrong], the two articles on Sir Samuel's poems which you so kindly sent me. I think they bring out the fine qualities of the works criticised in very bold relief, and in so doing fulfil

one of the first functions of criticism; and although they are written with genuine sympathy, their tone is perfectly impartial.

I always think that the world seldom appreciates poetry until it has been carefully expounded. Every new poet appeals to a new taste, and without an interpreter his progress must be slow. As a rule, an Irish poet, unless constantly living in London and identified with some dominant literary clique, has to wait long for disciples, and his fellow-countrymen who ought to rally about him are either too timid or perhaps even too jealous to lend him a helping hand. Sir Samuel cannot complain of neglect or want of recognition; for his powers have been long acknowledged and appreciated in England by men of finest critical discernment: nevertheless, it is refreshing to find so full and careful a study undertaken in such a spirit of independence by an Irish writer in an Irish magazine. Even those who are familiar with Sir Samuel's works, and appreciate them, will read them with keener pleasure and better comprehension with the help of these excellent articles; and in perusing them and the well-selected extracts they contain, one is particularly struck by the poet's intellectual strength and activity, and the abundance and variety of his imaginative resource.

My dear Armstrong [wrote Sir Samuel on the 16th March 1886],—My wife and I are both very grateful to you for your kindness in sending us your new volume. I am gratified, too, at finding that you turn to home-themes. We will have to make a literature for this country whatever be the fate of this or that policy, and you and a few others are the men on whom the duty will first fall. It must be lofty, moral, and distinctively Irish. You are qualified in the two former, and qualifying in the last requisite. The Poets will save the people whom the rogues and cowards have corrupted. I shall not live, I daresay, to see the salvation, but I shall die believing in it. I have, indeed, had a warning not to expect long-deferred events. I am writing, for the first time, to-day, in my office, after a two months' serious illness, during which I completed my seventy-fifth year.

Two pieces in the volume, as yet, give me chief pleasure. The general Wicklow scene in the first romance, and the bursting of Loch Nahanagan, in which the revulsion of feeling is as touching as the incident's expression is powerful. Also I am much pleased with the "Lifeboat." As a general rule I don't like any of the exceptional metres affected by Tennyson and Browning, and am certain that strength and finish and dignity are better clothed in the measures you have used throughout the greater part of your work. Did I send you a thin blue volume I published some years ago? If not, I should like to do so. My hand is still unsteady, so I say adieu.—Most truly yours, SAML. FERGUSON.

DEAR LADY FERGUSON [wrote Professor Armstrong after the death of his friend],—I am sure you will not think me tardy in the expression of our deep sympathy with you in your great sorrow. During the past few months Sir Samuel's sufferings and your care and anxiety have been constantly present to our minds, and the cloud that has now cast its heavy shadow upon you has darkened us also.

The light that has passed away has cheered me many and many a time in the happy past, and its loss is a personal sorrow. A more kindly, generous, sympathetic heart than Sir Samuel Ferguson's we shall not meet again; a brighter genius, a nobler patriotism, we can hardly hope to have amongst us.

I cherish with affection the last letter I had the honour of receiving from him, holding up before me his own lofty ideal of literary aims and literary excellence, and shall always prize as a precious memento the copy of his contribution on the Patrician Documents which he presented to me last spring, with his name and my own on the title-page, when I little thought I should never meet him again.

To all of us who have found for years in your happy hospitable house a centre of refining intellectual influences his loss will be felt as one that can never be replaced. But his kindliness, his gentleness, his wisdom, his warm and steadfast friendship, will remain treasured in our hearts, and his genius and character will be revered by his countrymen of generations to come.

My wife joins me earnestly in kindest remembrances and the deepest sympathy.—Believe me to remain, dear Lady Ferguson, very sincerely yours, G. F. ARMSTRONG.

'Ballads and Dreams,' by Tom Ferguson, appeared in 1885. The young author was Sir Samuel's kinsman. This grandson of Ferguson's Uncle Thomas of Tildarg was a handsome and attractive youth, beloved by the cousins whom he called "Uncle" and "Aunt." He was early deprived of his parents by death, and since their loss has made his home in Italy. The concluding stanzas of his lines on "Music," which opens with the question,

"Where does sweetest music linger?"

are here quoted. Few, it is believed, will dissent from his glorification of the poet's golden song:—

"In the mighty organs swelling
Through the churches, and foretelling
All the harmonies of angels and the ecstasies unknown,
In the stormy waters beating
On the wild shores, and repeating
The sublimest chants of Nature in majestic monotone!

But the music that is purest,
And the notes the truest, surest,
Still enduring, never ceasing, deep, ecstatic, sweet, and strong,
The divine and human blending,
God and Nature comprehending,
Meet and mingle, shrined for ever, in the Poet's golden song!"

Mr W. B. Yeats, now the author of many volumes, was a youth only when, in November 1886, after Sir Samuel's decease, he criticised his writings in the

'Dublin University Review.' From this extracts will be given in the chapter "His Work as a Poet."

'The Wanderings of Oisin, and other Poems,' published by Mr Yeats in 1889, showed that he too had yielded to the fascinations of the old Gaelic legends. Afterwards appeared 'The Celtic Twilight' and 'Countess Kathleen,' and in 1894 'The Land of Heart's Desire.'

Mr Yeats in 1895 has given the world a volume of his own poetry, and has edited 'A Book of Irish Verse selected from Modern Writers, with an Introduction and Notes.' It contains many well-chosen poems, and also some caustic criticism open to dispute—as, for example, when he assures his readers that "poetry has cast out" Thomas Moore "because he had not distinction of style," and asserts that "in England his power is over." He states that his book is "intended only a little for English readers, and not at all for Irish peasants, but almost wholly for the small beginning of that educated and national public which is our greatest need and perhaps our vainest hope."

In his introduction Mr Yeats writes thus of Ferguson, Allingham, and de Vere:—

> Meanwhile Samuel Ferguson, William Allingham, and Mr Aubrey de Vere were working quietly as men of letters,—Ferguson selecting his subjects from the traditions of the Bardic age, and Allingham from those of his native Ballyshannon, and Mr Aubrey de Vere wavering between English, Irish, and Catholic tradition. They were wiser than Young Ireland in the choice of their models, for, while drawing not

less from purely Irish sources, they turned to the great poets of the world, Mr de Vere owing something of his gravity to Wordsworth, Ferguson much of his simplicity to Homer, while Allingham had trained an ear, too delicate to catch the tune of but a single master, upon the lyric poetry of many lands. Allingham was the best artist, but Ferguson had the more ample imagination, the more epic aim. His "Vengeance of the Welshmen of Tirawley" is the best Irish ballad, and his "Conary," a long battle-tale in blank verse, the best Irish poem of any kind.

The cordial friendship which Ferguson felt for the Rev. Robert Perceval Graves, to whom he dedicated his 'Shakespearian Breviates,' has already been touched on. Dr Graves was a man of gentle and refined manners. His mind was highly cultivated and richly stored, his taste delicate and discriminating. He was the author of sundry uncollected poems, but his Biography of Sir William Rowan Hamilton is a standard work. As Vice-Warden of Alexandra College he strenuously laboured for the higher education of women, and as Sub-Dean of the Chapel Royal and Almoner of the Lord Lieutenant he befriended faithfully the charities of Dublin. He had enjoyed the friendship of Wordsworth when a curate in the Lake District of England, and in later life Dr Graves was a leader in the literary society of Dublin.

His nephew, Alfred Perceval Graves, son of the Bishop of Limerick, was regarded by Ferguson with hope and affection. Love for his country being one of Ferguson's strongest sentiments, it was natural that he should be attracted to young men of promise

who were workers in the field of Irish Literature, and of these Mr Graves has been among the most energetic. He is an active member of the Irish Literary Society of London, and has recently contributed to the "New Irish Library" 'The Irish Song-Book, with original Irish Airs,' published by T. Fisher Unwin in 1895.

In his introduction to this volume Mr Graves quotes the words of "a great musical critic," Dr Hubert Parry, who, in reviewing "the Bunting, Petrie, Holden, Joyce, and Levey collections, which contain over 2000 musical pieces," observes: "Irish folk-music is probably the most human, most varied, most poetical in the world, and is particularly rich in tunes which imply considerable sympathetic sensitiveness."

Alfred Perceval Graves had written long before his 'Songs of Killarney,' and published in 1880 his 'Irish Songs and Ballads.' These have the idyllic grace, the innocent gaiety, and the characteristic purity of Irish peasant life, and are the outcome of "affectionate studies" made by Mr Graves "among the mountains of Kerry." Some of them have been set to Irish airs by Charles Villiers Stanford. "Father O'Flynn" is probably the best known. This song has attained a wide popularity. It describes with spirit and humour the character of a typical Irish priest.

Ferguson had directed the attention of Mr A. M. Williams, then collecting material for his 'Poets and Poetry of Ireland,' to Mr Graves's 'Songs and Ballads

These, as soon as known, were appreciated by the American critic. The young poet wrote in acknowledgment:—

> I am greatly obliged for your letter of the 26th. I had already received a copy of his book from Mr Williams. I had noted with extreme satisfaction that he had assigned you that place in Irish poetry which I had always felt you were justly entitled to.

Mr Graves's later correspondence, and the noble sonnet which he wrote on the death of Sir Samuel Ferguson, and published in the 'Spectator' in August 1886, will appear in the final chapter of this biography.

Mr William Wilkins, in his 'Songs of Study,' published in 1881, enlarged, among other topics, on the enjoyments of college life when he and his brothers were distinguished students of Trinity College, Dublin. One of them has since obtained a Fellowship, and the poet the Head-Mastership of the High School in that city. He presented his volume to Ferguson, who acknowledged it in May 1881:—

> I thank you very much for the volume you have been kind enough to send me. I have read it with great and varied pleasure—liking you most, I think, in your staid metres and moods of sweetness. . . . The volume, indeed, does us all credit, and entitles you to all our thanks; but I would wish the young men of genius and ability of our country could be induced to publish at home.

Mr Wilkins's volume had been issued by C. Kegan Paul & Co. of London. Sir Samuel was most de-

sirous to stimulate the publishing trade in Dublin, and make the city in which he lived a centre of literary life. In pursuance of this desire Ferguson not only watched with the keenest interest, but aided to the best of his power, the career of promising young aspirants to the service of the Muse. Although personally unknown to him at the time, he wrote in November 1884 of Mr William Larminie, author of 'Glanlua, and other Poems,' to Dr Whitley Stokes:—

> I have lately seen some work of Mr Larminie of the India Office—poetry of a high class, very full of Irish feeling. He is a man who would be enraptured with the "Togail Troi." I don't know him personally, but believe him to be a gentleman, as I am sure he is a man of genius. I say this in case he should cross your path in London.

They met before the close of Ferguson's life, and after his death Mr Larminie, in writing to Lady Ferguson, spoke of "the praise which Sir Samuel Ferguson bestowed on 'The Return of the Gods' in his published volume."

When the thought recurs of poets "in their misery dead," slain by hostile criticism, who believed that their names "were writ in water," it would seem that words of encouragement are wiser and more stimulating, even if such should be accompanied by strictures uttered in a spirit of kindness, and designed not to wound, but rather to guide and help.

CHAPTER XXIV.

1830–1886.

HIS WORK AS A POET.

"Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise
(That last infirmity of noble mind)
To scorn delights and live laborious days;
But the fair guerdon when we hope to find,
And think to burst out into sudden blaze
Comes the blind Fury with the abhorrèd shears,
And slits the thin-spun life. 'But not the praise,'
Phœbus replied, and touched my trembling ears:
'Fame is no plant that grows on mortal soil,
Nor in the glistering foil
Set off to the world, nor in broad rumour lies,
But lives and spreads aloft by those pure eyes
And perfect witness of all-judging Jove;
As he pronounces lastly on each deed,
Of so much fame in heaven expect thy meed."

—MILTON.

IT was not until 1864 that Ferguson published a volume of his collected poems, which he named 'Lays of the Western Gael.' It included some of his earliest work —translations from the Irish, "The Forging of the Anchor," and other ballads; but to these were added new poems — "The Tain-Quest," the "Healing of Conall Carnach," the "Burial of King Cormac," "Grace

O'Maly," the "Adieu to Brittany," "Westminster Abbey," the "Death of Dermid," and others, versions and adaptations.

Eight years later, in 1872, appeared his epic of "Congal." On this he had long laboured, and upon it he believed that his repute as a poet would ultimately rest. In 1880 he published another volume, 'Poems,' followed in 1882 by 'Shakespearian Breviates,' an adjustment of twenty-four of the longer plays of Shakespeare to convenient reading limits. His latest work was the translation into English blank verse of Saint Patrick's 'Confession' and the 'Coroticus Epistle,' already spoken of. These, with a dissertation on the Patrician Documents contained in the "Trias Thaumaturga" and "Book of Armagh," he had read before the Royal Irish Academy in 1885. They have been posthumously published in book-form in 1888 under the title 'The Remains of Saint Patrick, Apostle of Ireland.'

Upon Ferguson's poetry—written at intervals during a lifetime devoted to professional and public work—the only criticisms which will here be cited are those of other poets. These, as being the opinions of the most competent judges, should be of the highest value. Some appear in published volumes, but most of them in their correspondence. Praises accorded to his verse by critics not thus specially qualified are accordingly excluded.

On the publication of the 'Lays of the Western Gael,' 1864, Lady Wilde — a woman of intellectual

grasp and fine enthusiasm — who had been a contributor under the *nom de plume* "Speranza" to the poetry of the 'Nation,' wrote to its author:—

1 Merrion Square, *14th November* 1864.

Dear Mr Ferguson,—All Ireland will rejoice that your fine poems are at length given to the country in a permanent and portable form. And for myself I feel very proud that my name should be inscribed by your own hand in the copy I have now the pleasure of calling my own. I am glad to find along with our old favourites so many new pieces. "The Tain-Quest," "Grace O'Maly," and others are new to me. They are fine bold fragments of antique life, with such human touches as link them to the present and give them fresh vitality. With all your archaism you still weave in that eternal *human* element, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. Your destiny was to be the Historic Bard of Ireland, and what you have already done proves how nobly you could have fulfilled your mission. Go on, and leave a great legacy to your Country. Make Posterity your client, even though Posterity only pays in marble wreaths on marble brows. Your "Aideen" is to me unutterably solemn and beautiful. I place it first of all you have ever written. I wish it had been illustrated in a less abstract mode. What a picture could be made of Aideen as "she rode the ridge of war" amid the kings! All your poems furnish fine subjects for illustration: give them up to Cassell for the purpose. It would waken up new ideas too amongst our artists. Do think of this. Why have you omitted the poem of "Thomas Davis"?—it is such a mournful pathetic wail, with all the true Irish characteristics.

Amsbury, Mass., *21st* 7/ 1867.

My dear Friend [wrote the American poet Whittier],—I ought long ago to have acknowledged the receipt of thy 'Lays of the Western Gael,' and the sonnet so complimentary to myself, forwarded to me by the kindness of Miss Smith of Philadelphia; but I did not know thy address, and waited to

ascertain it. I have read thy poems with real delight; some of them were before familiar to me. I have always admired the vigour and rude power and pathos of "The Welshmen of Tirawley." "The Forging of the Anchor" is world-wide. "The Burial of King Cormac" and "The Fairy Thorn" are great favourites of mine; and I am very glad of the opportunity to thank the author for them. And I like exceedingly the translations from the old Irish bards. The "Lament for the Sons of Usnach" is full of a wild pathos, and is most admirably rendered in ringing verse, like the wail of a Lyke-wake. No volume of Transatlantic poetry has been more welcome to me than thine.

Excuse the brevity of this note and its wretched penmanship. I am too ill at this time to write. With thanks and hearty congratulations, I am thy friend, JOHN G. WHITTIER.

Thomas Aird wrote from Mountain Hall, Dumfries, 14th November 1864:—

MY DEAR FERGUSON,—I got your letter and volume last Tuesday. I have been long looking for such a book from you. To read it eagerly at once, and then go back on parts of it with reserve of consideration, have been my chief recreation for the last two or three days.

"The Tain-Quest" is the greatest of your new pieces; next in my liking stand "The Burial of King Cormac," "Grace O'Maly," "Adieu to Brittany," and the "sage and serious" verses on Westminster Abbey reprinted from 'Blackwood.' There are fine things in the versions from the Irish; but they have not impressed me so much as the Fair Hills of Ireland had led me to expect. Your own estimate of them in the introductory note is discriminating and judicious.

In all respects "The Tain-Quest" is one of the most striking poems of our day. Specially do I admire the artistic skill with which you have doubled the interest of the Quest itself by introducing in the most natural and unencumbering way so many of the best points of the "Great Cow-Foray"—the subject-matter of the "Tain." The Shield has long been grand in

poetry; you have made it still grander. The refusal of Fergus to stir to the force of private sympathy, but his instantaneous recognition of the patriotic necessity of Song, is a just and noble conception. The power of the Bard over the rude men of Gort; the filial piety of the sons of Sanchan, and their brotherly love; that mysterious vapour, and that terrible blast of entrance, and that closing malediction by the Maiden, are all very notable toward the consummation of effect. As for the kissing of the champions in the pauses of the fight, I know of nothing in the reaches of our human blood so marvellously striking and sweet: you have now made it immortal in song. Your lay ended with the malediction. However admirably expressed, the last stanza is an error in art. Surely you spoil the grand close, and the whole piece, by appending your own personality of interference as a commentator on the malediction. Might I not further say (with a peculiar smile) you make the preordained fulfilment of Malison a sublime apology for Irish Grub Street?

Yes. Give us more of such pieces as "The Tain-Quest." But do not forget your leading Saints. You cannot be fully representative of "Holy Ireland" if you do not set one or two of them in song. Well, then—

> "Bear the cup to Sam the poet;
> Yield the bard his poet's meed;
> What we've heard is but a foretaste,
> Lays more lofty now succeed."

In all circumstances it is pleasant for me to send good wishes to Mrs Ferguson and yourself.—Ever yours,

THOMAS AIRD.

Mr W. C. Bennett also expressed his gratification on receiving a copy of the 'Lays':—

What a pleasure it has been to me to put your collected poems among my favourite volumes on my shelf of poets in my bookcase! I had so often wondered and regretted that you had not enabled us to have all your poems in a

form in which we could fully feel how much you had done and how true a poet you are. The public will recognise more your power — your simplicity of thought and feeling and expression, your bold and thorough truth to nature, and the strength of your imagination, and the mastery you have over the force and music of our language. The readers have known this well; but the many, though they have admired your poems in their scattered appearance, I do not think have had produced upon them the full effect which this collection must produce. Where almost every page is equally fine it is almost needless to particularise poems as beautiful, but if I were to select those which have more especially forced themselves on my memory, I should name "The Forging of the Anchor," "The Welshmen of Tirawley" (strangely powerful in its rude and savage simplicity), "The Tain-Quest" (very grand in parts), "Willy Gilliland," and "The Boatman's Hymn."

In thanking you for the present and permanent pleasure the volume has given and will give to me, I must express the pleasant feeling with which I received it from yourself. Ranking you as I do among the few genuine living singers, it was no small gratification to me to be so remembered by you. With every good wish, yours very truly,

W. C. Bennett.

Mr MacCarthy wrote from London:—

Believe me that among the many who have longed for this book, no one will value it more highly and love it more fondly than I. It is so delightful to have the old favourites collected together by your own hand, and united with so much that is new and valuable, that I am really unable to tell you the pleasure the whole collection has given me. The poem of "Aideen," which I read in London, awoke many a fond recollection of scenes where I spent much of my childhood. I have expressed in many quarters my admiration of such powerful single-line pictures as "Low Clontarf's wave-trampled floor," "The angry Sand-Bull's roar," and other epithets that must henceforth be ever associated with these localities; but

no one can tell of my own individual feelings as I read the lines, I may say, in exile, and thought of the many days that I too roamed over bare "Ben Edar's Peak," and strolled unconsciously through "Aideen's briary dell" in simple enjoyment of the place and scene. I trust that the reception which your volume is almost sure to receive will induce you to collect your other writings. You owe this to yourself and to the country.

Mr Aubrey de Vere wrote from Curragh Chase, Adare, in a tone somewhat sad and desponding:—

It contains much that must in any case have much interested me; but that interest was increased by the circumstance that you had chosen Irish subjects. I have often regretted that so few Irishmen have ever illustrated their country as Burns, Scott, and a host of Scottish poets have illustrated Scotland. The link between the patriotic and the poetic spirit has amongst us been broken for many a sad year, and the loss, both moral and literary, has been greater far, I believe, than is generally known. To this cause I attribute largely the signal ignorance of Irish history among our higher classes and in England, and to a great extent the gulf of separation between the higher and the lower classes in this country.

Moore did something to mitigate this evil, in his Irish Melodies, that small fraction of his works which I cannot but regard as worth all the rest; and Allingham in his tale of the Music-master has given us a real idyl of Irish life which ought to be better known than it is.

I have read your volume twice over, and doubt not that future readings will reveal to me many additional passages of beauty. On referring to the index, I find that the poems which I marked as having especially pleased me are "The Tain-Quest," "The Healing of Conall Carnach," "Grace O'Maly," "Aideen's Grave," "The Fairy Thorn," "The Forging of the Anchor," "The Death of Dermid," "Deirdré's Farewell," and her Lament, "Cean-Dubh Deelish." I

earnestly hope that you will give us more such illustrations of our Irish history. I only wish that they were sure of meeting among us Irish the reception they deserve.

Ferguson's old friend Dr Madden took a less desponding view than Mr de Vere of Ireland:—

I was greatly afraid, when you read those poems to me which I have spoken of, that you might be deterred from publishing them. For your sake, but above all, my dear Ferguson, for the sake of this dear land of ours, under all its miseries so deserving of all our love and of all that we can do for its honour, I rejoice in the publication of them. And let me add, I rejoice in it for the sake of one who of all others is most nearly and dearly affected by everything that concerns your fame; and with kind regards to her, your good lady, believe me, my dear Ferguson, yours very faithfully,

R. R. MADDEN.

Mr Justice O'Hagan, who had reviewed Ferguson's poems in the 'Irish Monthly,' embodied his criticism in a volume which he published in 1887, 'The Poetry of Sir Samuel Ferguson.' In this little book Judge O'Hagan observed:—

There are, however, two among these modern poets especially distinguished for their success in fusing and interweaving Gaelic modes of thought and turns of expression with their verse, and thus rendering familiar to us the outward garb and inner soul of the poetry of the Celt. These two are Clarence Mangan and Sir Samuel Ferguson. With the former this power flows from the prompt and intuitive perceptions of genius. With the latter it was not the result of genius alone, but of extensive acquisition and years of study, devoted, in the intervals of his professional labours, to the mastery of all that was to be known concerning the ways and fortunes, the religion, laws, and habitudes, of the varied branches of the great

Gaelic stem which from time to time have taken root in the soil of Ireland. . . .

Coming down to the middle ages and the time subsequent to the English invasion, we have the graphic and striking ballad of "The Welshmen of Tirawley." . . . From this singular tale of vengeance and retribution we can only extract the stanzas which relate how the blinded Emon Lynott nursed and trained his son, Emon Oge, amid the solitudes of Ben Nephin, that he might become the instrument of his revenge upon the Barretts :—

"And ere the bright-orbed year its course had run,
On his brown round-knotted knee he nursed a son,
A child of light, with eyes
As clear as are the skies
In summer, when sunrise
Has begun ;
So the Lynott
Nursed his vengeance on the Barretts of Tirawley.

And, as ever the bright boy grew in strength and size,
Made him perfect in each manly exercise,
The salmon in the flood,
The dun deer in the wood,
The eagle in the cloud
To surprise
On Ben Nephin
Far above the foggy fields of Tirawley.

With the yellow-knotted spear-shaft, with the bow,
With the steel, prompt to deal shot and blow,
He taught him from year to year
And trained him without a peer,
For a perfect cavalier,
Hoping so—
Far his forethought—
For vengeance on the Barretts of Tirawley.

And when mounted on his proud-bounding steed,
Emon Oge sat a cavalier indeed ;

Like the ear upon the wheat
When winds in autumn beat
On the bending stems, his seat;
And the speed
Of his courser
Was the wind from Barna-na-gee o'er Tirawley!"

Sir Samuel's versions from the Irish would of themselves deserve a separate comment. They represent but too faithfully the sorrow and disaster, the lamentation and the woes, of the days of defeat and spoliation. What can be more melancholy, but at the same time more musical, than "The Downfall of the Gael," of which the Irish original was written by O'Gnive, bard of the O'Neills, in the days of Queen Elizabeth? . . .

Coming down two hundred years later, to the days of the Penal Laws, we have the lament over the ruins of the Abbey of Timoleague. . . .

Thus traversing all the ages, from the shadowy gigantic forms and mystic lays of the earliest epoch down to our own times, from Cuchullin and Fergus MacRoy to Thomas Davis, may we not say that Sir Samuel Ferguson has achieved a great work for his country? Be it no disparagement to other labourers in the same field, whom we honour and admire, to say that he is in the front of them all. . . .

If a distinctive national Irish literature in the English tongue is, as we hope and believe, an achievement of which the foundations have been already laid, and which one day, in fair and stately proportions, will body forth all that is best and noblest in the character and aspirations of the Gael, and not of the Gael alone, but of the Gael as interfused aud blended with the Dane, the Saxon, and the Norman, according to the noble language of Davis himself, then to Sir Samuel Ferguson may the greater praise belong. Be this the pillar of his fame!

Words of generous appreciation in addition to those of Whittier came across the Atlantic. Mr A. M. Williams, a poet and man of letters, included in his

'Studies in Folk-Song and Popular Poetry,' Boston, 1894, an essay on "Sir Samuel Ferguson and Celtic Poetry," from which a few passages may be cited:—

"Congal" is not the only contribution made by Sir Samuel Ferguson to Celtic poetry. 'The Lays of the Western Gael' are a series of ballads founded on events in Celtic history, and derived from the early chronicles and poems. They are original in form and substance, the ballad form and measure being unknown to the early Celtic poets of Ireland, but they preserve in a wonderful degree the ancient spirit, and give a picture of the ancient times with all the art of truth and verity. . . .

These ballads have a solemnity of measure like the voice of one of the ancient bards chanting of

> "Old forgotten far-off things,
> And battles long ago,"

and they are clothed with the mists of a melancholy age. They include such subjects as "The Tain-Quest," the search of the bard for the lost lay of the great cattle-raid of Queen Maeve of Connaught, and its recovery by invocation from the voice of its dead author arising in misty form above his grave; "The Healing of Conall Carnach," a story of violated sanctuary and its punishment; "The Welshmen of Tirawley," one of the most spirited and original, and which has been pronounced by Mr Swinburne as among the finest of modern ballads, telling of a cruel mulct inflicted upon the members of a Welsh colony in Ireland and its vengeance, and other incidents in early Irish history. The verses on "Aideen's Grave" are a characteristic specimen of the tone and spirit of these ballads. . . .

The main literary work of Sir Samuel Ferguson was devoted to this revivification of the spirit of ancient Celtic poetry, in spite of a highly successful *début* as an English poet in "The Forging of the Anchor," which at once took its place among those poems that are the familiar treasures of the people; and in this he was doubtless governed by

something of patriotic spirit as well as by natural predilection. His work is not great in quantity, and he treasured his inspiration and perfected his workmanship with careful pains. Its result is to give a reproduction of the pervading elements of Irish Celtic poetry in English form with almost absolute perfection, and imbued with a spirit of original genius. In his poems, rather than in Macpherson's 'Ossian' or in the literal translations, will the modern reader find the voice of the ancient Celtic bards speaking to the intelligence of to-day in their own tones, without false change and dilution, or the confusion and dimness of an ancient language. The value of this work has not yet been fully appreciated by literary critics, but there is no doubt in my mind but that it eventually will be.

The Vicomte de la Villemarqué wrote from Keransker in 1864 on receipt of the 'Lays of the Western Gael':—

MON CHER AMI,—J'ai voulu attendre pour vous remercier de votre aimable envoi que j'en eu lu votre volume; j'en achève la lecture, et je ne trouve pas de mot qui exprime bien les sentiments qu'elle m'inspire: faute de mieux j'emploie celui d'*admiration*, mais il ne rend pas encore à mon gré ce que j'éprouve pour vous. . . . Mon cher ami, vous venez de remuer en moi le fibre poétique plus délicieusement qu'elle a été depuis longtemps; hurrah pour l'Irlande et son barde! . . . Vos poèmes légendaires sont de vrais poèmes épiques; ils en ont le nerf, le souffle et le coup d'aile d'aigle. Et quel art! quel rhythme! Il m'a ravi comme une musique; c'est celui de Saint Fiak, et de nos anciens bardes armoricains Je jure que désormais les Irlandais vous disent—

> Bear the cup *to our Ferguson*, . . .
> Chaunt us, Bard, the famous "Tain."

Cette "Quête du Tain" est chantée avec une incomparable puissance de versification. . . .

"The Burial of King Cormac" m'a encore plus enthousi-

asmé, à une nouvelle lecture, c'est vraiment un chef-d'œuvre de poésie heroïque. J'ai aussi relu avec un nouveau plaisir les quinze pièces déjà publiées à Dublin, et je ne me lasserai jamais de lire "The Forging of the Anchor" et "The Fair Hills of Ireland," pour laquelle vous savez nous avons passion, et l'Ode de votre O'Byrne qui a trouvé dans vous un interprête digne de lui. Cette poésie lyrique de votre receuil, moitié traduite, moitié imitée de la poésie nationale, est vraiment à la hauteur de la portion épique; je ne sais même pas si je ne le prefère point: vous avez là une traduction d'O'Gnive à laquelle rien ne saurait être comparé. J'en ai pleuré; ces cris patriotiques me vont au cœur; j'ai été bercé de chants pareils. En avez vous beaucoup de tels? C'est écrit avec des larmes et du sang. Donnez-nous en souvent de ce genre.

In a further letter, written after a reperusal of Ferguson's 'Lays,' the Viscount expresses his disappointment—

Je ne pas trouver dans votre receuil la spirituelle chanson politique, "*When this Old Cap was New.*" . . . Je ne veux pas finir cette lettre sans vous prier de me mettre aux pieds de Mme. Ferguson, au souvenir de laquelle ma femme se rappelle, et sans vous assurer de nouveau de mes sentiments très affectueux. VTE. DE LA VILLEMARQUÉ.

A criticism from the pen of the Breton poet has been thus translated:—

In default of poems in the Irish language itself—a language which, notwithstanding the desponding presages of Mr Ferguson, I affirm will yet make itself heard in its proper hour—I shall lend a right willing ear to new 'Lays of the Western Gael.' For, so far from being tiresome to me, as to a certain super-Saxonised sheller of rhythmical pea-pods (*éplucheur de mots et de rimes*) of the 'Saturday Review,' Mr Ferguson's poetry gives me great delight. My pleasure would be complete

if he would but realise the ideal of Anglo-Irish poetry of which I dream: I indicate it frankly to the author of "The Burial of King Cormac" and "The Forging of the Anchor." He possesses the art, the rhythm, the nerve, the inspiration, and the fire. Let him apply those rare faculties with which God has endowed him to Irish subjects more varied, of a more general interest, taken in larger measure, from contemporaneous history, in the living chronicle of his sympathising country; and men will say of his 'Lays of the Gael' what they have said of the famous Breton Lays of Marie of France—

> "Lays they are that ladies please
> With pure delight in all degrees,
> For lays of goodwill [lois] are these."

After the publication of "Congal" in 1872 it was intimated to its author by Margaret Stokes that her father proposed to review his epic. The sympathy between Ferguson and his beloved friend made this intelligence very gratifying to him, and he wrote to Miss Stokes giving his own interpretation of the action of the poem. The contemplated review was never written—Dr Stokes's professional engagements were too engrossing.

March 12, 1873.

My dear Margaret,—As you are good enough to wish to see the handsome things Mr de Vere has said of "Congal," I enclose his letter, which, pray, return to me by-and-by. Nothing could be more gratifying to me than what my wife tells me you hinted at as possible—a notice of "Congal" by the man most capable of judging of the work in all its aspects. I would indeed feel greatly pleased if your father could find time for such occupation. I am sure he grasps the whole action, and sees how it hangs together, and moves to one end, which indeed was the main thing I had in view in writing it, and the one thing in which, if I may say it, many finer works of our day are deficient.

If I myself were called on to make an exposition of my own idea of "Congal," I would begin by showing the place in the old Irish social scheme of the Bard—the Bards' burthensomeness, and the efforts to expel and reduce them, first under Conor MacNessa, when Cuchullin protected them, and next at the Synod of Dromceat, when Columba broke the force of the blow that fell upon them and drove bands of them abroad on the hospitality of the old bard-honouring nobles of Ulidia. Next I would show the fallen estate of the Kings of Uladh, who, from ruling at Emania over all the province from Easroe to Dundalk, had been circumscribed by the encroachments of the Clan Colla within the little limits of Down and Antrim. Here young Congal, after aiding in the restoration of Domnal, disappointed of his reward, and surrounded by the exiled Bards, who hoped for their restoration to social power and dignity on the ruins of the newly constituted Christian establishment, comes on the scene, distracted between the sense of injury and the desire to have his share of the pleasures of life. I don't think it would become me to say a word of the treatment of the subject after this preliminary. Only I would observe that I wished my action to toil slowly up to its turning-point, and, after a pause there, go direct to its catastrophe with increasing momentum. I have stopped to moralise at the *cando* in the banquet scene, but meant at least to keep the action in continuous progress everywhere else. I think I have been too profuse in illustration and simile, and that this is the most palpable of my faults, but I could not altogether discard the character of my original. No one appears to advantage as an Egoist, and as I wish to keep my good standing in your eyes, I go no further.—Believe me very affectionately, SAML. FERGUSON.

In a letter to Ferguson, written in 1874, Professor Edward Dowden thus speaks of "Congal":—

You say "Congal" has not been a success. I think, whether in "broad rumour" or not, a success it has been, estimated by the "perfect witness of all-judging Jove." A poem with epic breadth and thews is not likely to be popular now. A diseased and over-sensitive nerve is a qualification for the writing of

poetry at present much more than a thoughtful brain or strength of muscle. Some little bit of novel sensibility, a delight in such colours as French milliners send over for ladies' bonnets, or the nosing of certain curious odours, is enough to make the fortune of a small poet.

What seems to me most noteworthy in your poems is the union of culture with simplicity and strength. Their refinement is large and strong, not curious and diseased, and they have spaces and movements which give one a feeling like the sea, or the air on a headland.

I had not meant to say anything of "Congal," but somehow this came and said itself.—Very truly yours, E. DOWDEN.

The greatest poem which Sir Samuel Ferguson has written is, in our estimation, his "Congal," published in 1872 [wrote Judge O'Hagan]. It is a genuine Irish epic, based, like other epics, upon mingled history and legend, having its roots in the deepest human passions—wrath, love, ambition, revenge—and with these passions shaped by destiny to a fatal end. No poem so Homeric in the march of the narrative, in the character of the heroes, or in the resonant majesty of the versification, has appeared in our time, and withal it is thoroughly and in essence Celtic.

The old Bardic tale, the "Cath Magh-Rath," which culminates in the battle of Moyra, A.D. 637, on which Ferguson founded his epic, was retold by Mr Allingham in 'Fraser's Magazine,'—May 1875,—in which he thus speaks of "Congal":—

It is not part of the plan of this paper to review "Congal," to put it into the winnowing-machine of criticism, but to point to it as one of the works in recent poetic literature worthiest of being known and studied.

The author is no untried man in the world of letters and the world of practical life. Samuel Ferguson, Q.C., LL.D., &c., &c., Deputy Keeper of the Public Records of Ireland, is a distinguished archæologist as well as a poet. Though his

poems as a whole are far less known than they ought to be, "The Forging of the Anchor" has long ago taken its place among classical English lyrics; nor is it any longer a secret that the admirable piece of humour called "Father Tom and the Pope," which, like "The Anchor," first appeared in 'Blackwood's Magazine,' and has delighted so many readers, is also his. In this era of advertising and trumpet-blowing, he is one of those who have preferred to be private. At what time the public shall begin to recognise the place in English poetry of the author of "Congal," and 'Lays of the Western Gael, and other Poems,' is more their concern than his. But the Old Dustman, Father Time, though he may be slow, does not fail to carry off rubbish in his cart; while things of worth, great or small, become added to the inheritance of the human race.

Dear Mr Ferguson [wrote Lady Wilde from Moytura House, Cong, August 12, 1872],—You have added a splendid and noble poem to our literature, and pray accept my grateful thanks for the kind and gratifying words which you have inscribed with my name in the presentation copy I have had the honour and pleasure to receive from you. I have read and re-read and thought much over this poem. Congal seems to me to typify Ireland. He has the noble, pure, loving nature of his race — still clinging to the old, from instinctive faith and reverence, through all the shadowy forebodings that he is fighting for a lost cause; and the supernatural here has a weird reality and deep significance. It is the expression of our own presentiments. The pathetic beauty and interest of Congal's career is heightened by the consciousness that he is fated, doomed—for the darkness of the old era must fade before the light of the new dispensation; and we see even this light breaking in on his own mind, as in the prayer before battle, when he utters the great "perhaps," which is the first gleam of a dawning truth. Yet he fights on, with the self-immolating zeal of a martyr, for the old prejudices of his nation, his fathers, his childhood, against the new ideas that overthrew all he reverenced. Still, all our sympathies are with Congal—with the suffering, the fated, the wronged—for a

beautiful nature underlies all. So it is with Ireland. She has the sympathy of the World because of the intense faith, love, and reverence from which spring her faults, her failure, and her doom—for all these qualities are arrayed against progress, against the advancing light—and for the old Idols against the Eternal Truth.

The death of Congal, too, has a pathetic significance. The False requires no Hero to slay it: it is doomed, and the weakest hand can effect its fall.

Here again I find a symbolism to our poor Irish cause: always led by a hero, always slain by a fool. I must talk over this, and a great deal more in the epic, when I see you.

I like the full flow of your verse, with the strong, firm rhymes, which are always pure and musical, yet never obtrusive on the ear by strangeness or straining; and throughout there is the rapid throb of young heroic blood. Yet one is also often reminded that the author is well versed in the highest classic models.

There are some exceedingly interesting and dramatic fragments from the Irish in the appendix: of course they are your own, as you do not name any other author. They are admirably rendered, and you must give us a collected volume of Dramatic fragments from the Irish. These sketches are much too good for an appendix. I look with wonder on this large and handsome volume evolved out of the dull routine of Dublin life, where so little exists to stimulate the intellect. What thought, what courage, what intellectual fervour, to produce so noble a poem! What artistic power to eliminate these scenes from the dark past of above a thousand years ago, and set them before us with so much of real human life and feeling, and with all the accessories so harmoniously blended in, that we are not startled by a single incongruity, nor yet are our sympathies disturbed by any visible effort to intrude the learning of the antiquary or historian! Still, it is evident that none but a mind well cultured in both these departments of literature could have produced so perfect a result. You had first a rich store of material to fling into your crucible before you evoked the gold.

Forgive me all this long outpouring of my thoughts, and believe me ever gratefully yours,

JANE FRANCESCA WILDE.

And Burton, with his fine genius of artist and man of letters, wrote his criticisms to the author, who had dedicated the work to him,—for "Congal" was inscribed to "Three much prized Friends, Margaret Stokes, Whitley Stokes, and Frederic William Burton":—

When you told me you were sending me "Congal," and even when I received it (until I had time to look into it), I had no notion it was really your great, long-hoped-for "Battle of Moyra," but rather some poem worked out in the meantime. I hail it with a thousand welcomes and embraces. I took it up on Friday evening, and rather devoured than read until the small hours of the morning had come unawares upon me.

It bore me along like a good ship that bounds forcibly and springingly over the waves, driven by a fresh and fair wind, till the aim of the voyage is forgotten in the delight of voyaging, and the port is wished still far away. I don't think I know of anything produced in our own era that can compare with "Congal" in vitality, in virile force, and in epic dignity. The characters have a life and a consistency that bring them out in startling relief, and the interest never flags for a moment. It is Homeric.

I really know nothing in modern work to compare with many passages I could point out in "Congal" in passionate power of expression, born of vigour of conception. That third book is gorgeous in its imaginativeness, and though I well recollect your reading to me years ago those passages where the supernatural agencies are brought into play, and though the impression was deep and lasting, yet now, reading it for myself, and with all the context, it seems to gain in power and in terror. It is quite wonderful to me how you have availed yourself of the incidents in the old Irish poem,

which sometimes in their rude naïveté rather excite a smile, and have turned them into dignity and beauty. Certainly the unavoidable incident of St Erc's eggs would have been a crux to any one but yourself. But you have made it, by a touch or two, a poetical and yet most natural point. I could say a hundred things about this great work, which has lost nothing by being so long kept under your shaping hands; but perhaps I may yet have an opportunity of talking with you face to face about it. Yet I must just say how forcibly I am struck by the thoroughly northern colouring in general, and the thoroughly Irish colouring in particular, which is imparted to the whole poem. Your minute and loving acquaintance with every inch of the ground where the scenes are laid could alone have done this. But it was indispensable to the real life of the work.

The vehicle you have chosen in the metre is admirable. No other measure could carry on the narrative so boundingly, and fit itself so well to every necessity; whilst the short chants into which the speakers burst in the third and fourth books, gain and give force and charm by the contrast.

I have had no such joyful surprise for long as this of finding your epic at length really in print.

There are two or three printer's errors here and there, and though I daresay you have corrected them in some other proofs, I have carefully made notes of them, seeing them uncorrected in the pages.

I have put upon paper my notion for a device for the proposed publications, but as my time would not permit me quite to satisfy myself with it to-day, I shall postpone sending it for your opinion till I shall have got it to what I wish. . . .— Ever, dear Ferguson, affectionately yours,

FRED. W. BURTON.

Mr A. M. Williams wrote from America:—

I have read "Congal" with very great delight. I was particularly struck with the grandeur of the phantom figures of the Herdsman, the Walker, and the Washer of the Ford. They were grander than Ossian, as more distinct. . . .

I could say much of the happy boldness and felicity of

diction in "Congal," which struck me as more than rivalling at times Chapman's translation of Homer, and many things more to its honour, which would sound too much like flattery in the pages of a personal letter, and I hope to be able to bear my testimony in print. I hope to devote my summer vacation to a review of "Congal" with your other poetical works. . . .

I cannot expect much from your time, but I shall be always more than glad to hear from you on any occasion.

Mr Williams's review did not appear till after Ferguson's death. After a further lapse of time this able and sympathetic critic again wrote of "Congal":—

This is the work to which Sir Samuel Ferguson has devoted himself in his reproduction of Irish Celtic poetry, both ballad and epic, and particularly in his poem of "Congal." . . .

Its faithfulness as the reproduction of an ancient Celtic poem consists in the skill with which the characteristic style of language, its multiplied and doubled epithets, is renewed in English without the effect of archaism, and the reproduction of its heroic and primitive tone and spirit. Its original merits are the force and vigour of the narrative, the vivid descriptions of scenery, the strength and impressiveness of the supernatural figures, the genuine inspiration of battle in the combats, and the easy mastery of the "long resounding line" in the verse. There is no modern poem which so thoroughly reproduces the ancient form and spirit of a bygone age, and in which so complete and accurate an idea can be obtained of the element of a vanished poetry as in "Congal."

Of the felicity with which these double descriptive epithets are used there are a thousand specimens, such as

"The white-maned, proud-neck-arching tide,"

and they give the dominant characteristic of the style as in the original, with a grace and appropriateness which make them a natural part of the English language. . . .

With its faithfulness to tone and character, its skilful reproduction of style and language, its force and vigour of narrative, its forms of mythologic mysticism, and its appreciation of the magic of nature, "Congal" is the most perfect reproduction of the form and spirit of ancient Celtic poetry in existence, and from it the English reader who is not a Celtic student can obtain the best knowledge of its pervading elements.

The "long resounding" lines in "Congal" seemed to have charmed the ears of its poet readers. Mr MacCarthy enlarges on these in a letter of December 29, 1872:—

Your kind inscription on the fly-leaf of "Congal" gave me the greatest pleasure. . . . The copy you have so kindly sent me will possess a special value as coming from yourself. In the two books which I have read, Homer and his best interpreter, George Chapman, were ever present to my mind, —not that there was any trace of imitation, but that I felt I was reading the stately song of a bard who was akin to both.

"The long resounding march and energy divine"

of many lines can only be equalled, certainly not surpassed, in the 'Iliad' of George Chapman.

Sir Samuel Ferguson published in 1880 a volume entitled 'Poems.' Many of these were of a more philosophic, religious, and spiritual cast of thought than had previously been expressed in his writings. They will be reserved to illustrate the attitude of his mind towards questions of belief and personal experience. Besides these the volume contains poems on Irish subjects which have been pronounced by most competent judges to be Ferguson's masterpieces. Mr Aubrey de Vere considers "Conary" his highest

achievement; Mr Allingham prefers "Deirdré," whose story—ever captivating to Ferguson's imagination—was dramatised by him in this volume. "The Sinking of the Monitor," an incident of the Civil War in America, and "The Widow's Cloak," have been specially praised by Mr Williams; "Mesgedra," a Lay of the Western Gael, ably annotated and criticised by Mr Lyster; and "The Naming of Cuchullin,"—all these in the volume of 1880 have had their meed of admiration.

Sir Samuel Ferguson's poetry [wrote Mr Aubrey de Vere] has a very special character of its own. . . . It would be difficult to find, amid our recent literature, a poem which at once aims as high as "Conary" and as adequately fulfils its aim. Perhaps its greatest merit, its originality, may discourage rather than attract those indolent readers who shrink from all themes except such as they are used to—men of that species of intelligence which is well pleased to have its own coals stirred up to brighter flame, but sends out a jet of smoke in the face of one who throws fresh aliment on the fire. More apprehensive readers can, however, hardly fail to be struck by the degree in which they meet, within a narrow compass, so many of the higher qualities of poetry. . . .

Novel to English readers as is such a poetic theme, and embarrassing as are a few of the Gaelic names, this work belongs to the "great" style of poetry—that style which is characterised by simplicity, breadth of effect, a careless strength full of movement, but with nothing of the merely "sensational" about it, and an entire absence of those unclassic tricks that belong to meaner verse. It has caught thoroughly that epic character so remarkable in those Bardic Legends which were transmitted orally through ages when Homer must have been a name unknown in Ireland. . . .

The specimens of Sir Samuel Ferguson's poetry here presented need no elaborate comment. Obviously its qualities

are those characteristic of the noble, not the ignoble, poetry—viz., passion, imagination, vigour, an epic largeness of conception, wide human sympathies, vivid and truthful description: while with these it unites none of the vulgar stimulants for exhausted or morbid poetic appetites, whether the epicurean seasoning, the sceptical, or the revolutionary. Its diction is pure, its metre full of variety; and with these merits, common to all true poetry, it unites an insight which only a man of genius can possess into the special characteristics of those ancient times and manners which are so frequently its subject. His Irish poetry is Irish: not like a good deal which bears that name—*i.e.*, by dint of being bad English, while stuffed with but the vulgarer accidents, not the essential characteristics, of Gaelic Ireland,—not thus, but by having the genuine Gaelic spirit in it. That spirit, like the Irish airs, its most authentic expression, has much of the minor key about it, and many "shrill notes of anger" besides; but, alike with its sadness, its fierceness, and its wild fits of mirth, a witching tenderness is mingled: and all those qualities are largely found in Sir Samuel Ferguson's poetry. Whoever follows his footsteps up the purple glens of old Erin will not fail to hear the wild slogan of the clan, and farther off "the horns of Elfland faintly blowing." Such poetry can hardly fail sooner or later to conquer that difficulty which the most accomplished Englishmen often find in understanding poetry which worthily illustrates the highest Irish themes, even when the critic is patient with modern Irish comedy in its vulgarest forms. Poetry on its lower levels will gratify low appetites, notwithstanding serious diversities in national tastes: it is when poetry deals worthily with what is at once high and characteristic that the diversities and latent antagonisms of national tastes are tested, such diversities as Mr Matthew Arnold has admirably illustrated in his essay on "Celtic Literature." . . . He [Ferguson] will find readers, however, and their award will be, "The author of these poems added another string to the great English harp—the Gaelic string."

This criticism appeared among Mr de Vere's

'Essays, chiefly Literary and Ethical,' published in 1889, three years after Ferguson's death. It is discriminating, yet delicate. It is full of generous appreciation, and is doubly valuable as coming from one whose own gifts of genius render him so competent to judge of the works of others.

Mr Allingham wrote from Haslemere, Surrey, June 30, 1880:—

My dear Ferguson,—It would be hard indeed to find any other handwriting or any other book that could bring me as much pleasure as yours. Let me thank you and congratulate you most heartily. Many thoughts of my own swarmed about the pages as I turned them, like bees in a lime-tree; but 'twere to small purpose to try and make their buzzings articulate. Still, I must say a few things out of many. In your style high culture is reconciled with simplicity, directness, and originality, and nothing can be happier than your enrichment of English speech with Irish forms without the least violence. All the Irish poems are very remarkable, but "Deirdré" I count the chief triumph. Its peculiar form of unity is perfectly managed, while in general effect it recalls nothing so much as a Greek play. "The Widow's Cloak" is a notable artistic feat, but for monarchs and "men in red" I must confess to little liking. "Dear Wilde" gave, when you first sent it, and again gives, a sweet and tender sensation; but believe that not one of your poetic children has missed a friendly welcome here. As to the world into which they are sent to wander, I fear 'tis but a silly and a stupid world—this generation of it—in its notions of literature. For my own part, I do my best to play Coriolanus and banish *it*.

We are enjoying the summer in this village, situated between Hindhead and Blackdown, two upland regions of heather and wide prospects over the meadows, cornfields, old farm-steads, and oak-woods spread below and fading into blue distance. My wife finds plenty of sketching; little Gerald and Eva roll

in the hay and eat bilberries; I write, walk, read, think often of old friends, and am affectionately yours both,

W. ALLINGHAM.

Mr Williams's letter on "The Sinking of the Monitor" runs thus:—

I have received your new volume of poems with the greatest pleasure, and am more than delighted with its contents. I immediately republished the very thrilling poem on the loss of the "Monitor," and it has been already extensively copied. It is especially grateful to us, as European poets so seldom find any themes in our history or experience worthy of notice, and when one does in such a manner as that, we feel doubly grateful. I also greatly admire "The Hymn of the Fishermen," which you were kind enough to send me in a slip some time ago. But my opinion of the whole volume I shall take occasion to express more at length in a review with special reference to all your poetical works—'Lays of the Western Gael,' "Congal," and the present volume. . . .—Yours truly,

ALFRED M. WILLIAMS.

This was gratifying to Ferguson. A correspondence ensued which resulted in the dedication to him of Mr Williams's 'Poets and Poetry of Ireland' in these words: "To Sir Samuel Ferguson, who has done so much by genius to adorn, and by learning to illustrate, the Poetry of Ireland, this volume is dedicated."

I take great pleasure in forwarding to you with this a copy of 'The Poets and Poetry of Ireland' [wrote Mr Williams]. I am aware how thin must seem the knowledge of Irish Celtic literature to one of your scholarship, and how many mistakes and blunders you may find in it; but I venture to hope that I have shown an appreciation of the national characteristics of Irish poetry, and been able to recognise the genuine gold from the tinsel, and the real emeralds from the green glass

imitations. And also I hope to present in a proportionate and well-balanced form a representative body of Irish poetry.

The critic and the poet into whose aims and genius he so fully entered never met. Sir Samuel was no longer here when Mr Williams visited Ireland in 1887. He came for change of scene and recovery of health, a mourner for the loss of a beloved wife. When in Dublin he called on Lady Ferguson. She was then engaged in preparing for the press a popular edition of her husband's works. Mr Williams informed her as to the law of American copyright, and most kindly wrote an Introduction which would secure the volumes from piracy. From this Introduction a few passages are here given:—

Sir Samuel Ferguson was early attracted to the study of the ancient Celtic literature of Ireland, and early imbued with the spirit of its poetry. Some of the most beautiful of his poems in this spirit, particularly that very melodious and regal *keen*, the "Lament of Deirdré for the Sons of Usnach," are to be found in the volumes of 'Hibernian Nights' Entertainments' preceding these; and, in spite of a highly-successful *début* in English literature by "The Forging of the Anchor," which at once took its place among the poems of the English language, which are the vital and peculiar possessions of the people, and other poetical work, which would have given him a distinct place among English poets, the chief labour and success of his literary life were in the interpretation of Celtic history and poetry and spirit, and were by him so regarded. He did it alike with the learning of the profound and accurate scholar and the genius of the poet. He did not study the ancient Celtic literature and Bardic remains of Ireland in the spirit of the archæologist and antiquary, although with equal diligence and accuracy, but with a sympathetic appreciation of

its pervading elements of poetry and the genius of the Celtic race. . . .

To reproduce the spirit of ancient Celtic poetry in modern verse and revivify its shadowy figures, it is necessary to be imbued not only with an absolute knowledge of the history of the time, and to be able to repeople the green plains and brown mountains, the bare headlands and grassy burial mounds, and the vast and lonely cromlechs with the figures of the mythical heroes, and to see again the giants in the cloud-wraiths of vapour that stalk over the hills, and to hear the voices of the threatening or lamenting genii in the thunder of the surf and the roar of the swelling flood, but also to have a perfect sympathy with the melancholy and romantic genius of the people and the features of the landscape, which so largely coloured it. It is that appreciation of the past in the light of the present, and the informing spirit of the natural scenery, which so profoundly affected Wordsworth at the grave of Ossian, and is so perfectly expressed in the few lines written at Glen Almain. To accomplish this task requires a compelling genius hardly less strong than that of the bard in "The Tain-Quest," who summoned its dead creator to speak in the mists and voices of the air above his grave.

This is what Ferguson has done. He studied not to translate but to reproduce the spirit of the Ossianic verse. The mighty heroes of the battles and forays, whose warlike habits of mind were tempered with compassion and humanity and an almost feminine tenderness in comparison with the ferocity of the Scandinavian heroes, stride through 'The Lays of the Western Gael' and the epic of "Congal" in the performance of their feats of war and chase, in the exercise of their more than Homeric hospitality, in the dramas of love, and their peculiarly high-minded and passionate friendship, with a largeness of thew and sinew and an extravagance of deed suited to the romantic atmosphere, and yet with the essential truths of human passion and pathos. The gigantic figures of the spectres of headland and mountain, the storm and the flood, who were the friends or the foes of the heroes, and the spirits of the visible nature around them, the "Spectre Herdsman," the

"Giant Walker," the "Washer of the Ford," and other native ghosts and dæmons, who people Celtic poetry as they do that of every imaginative race in its primitive era, live and move, in their native hues and terrors, in the magic that informs the mist and cloud with personal shape as when they were first created in the vivid imaginations not yet emancipated from the invisible terrors of nature—

> "At midnight from their mountain-peaks
> The fierce De Danaan ghosts come down,"

and the voice of the meres and fells wail in calmer tones of lamentation and grief. . . . .

Finally, the impress of the past as it is visible to the present, the effect of the grey cairn and grassy burial-mound, and almost the last fading of the tokens of the aboriginal race into the bosom of nature, and the perception of its spirit amid the light and bustle of the day,—

> "The loneliness and awe secure"

of the forgotten dead,—is the task of the modern poet speaking in his own time, and to his own generation, of the past. This has been done by Ferguson, and not only does the spirit of Celtic Ireland dwell completely and perfectly in his poetry, but I know of no other instance in literature in which such a work has been so thoroughly and successfully accomplished. . . .

There need not be pointed out to any student of poetry the originality and felicity of his diction and rhythm, the happy boldness and vividness of epithet, and the direct clearness and simplicity of his style; nor to the student of humanity the high and pure thought, the noble aspiration, and the deep and profound patriotism, which were the nature of the man, and the product of his noble and lovable character.

Finally, it may be permitted in one of a nationality which cannot be accused of unfriendliness to the Irish people, and which has absorbed and is absorbing so many of its elements, to express the desire and the hope that a study of the works of Ferguson and of the lofty and noble type of the ancient heroes

whom he depicts, their chivalry and friendliness as well as courage and patriotism, will have its effect upon the spirit of modern times, and calm the passions as well as elevate the tone of patriotic endeavour among all who share the blood of the "kindly Gael." It would be the highest honour and most welcome tribute to the genius of the poet who has done so much to renew and vivify the spirit of Celtic Ireland in heroic verse.

On receiving the volume of 'Poems' published in 1880 Mr Bennett wrote:—

What a pleasure it was to me to see your handwriting again! What pleasure I have owed to you through fifty years! The Ballad poetry of Ireland has been my most treasured pocket-companion; and "The Welshmen of Tirawley," "Willy Gilliland," "The Boatman's Song," and "The Forging of the Anchor" have been as often re-read by me as any poems I have delighted in. I thank you from my heart for the deep pleasure your genius has given to me in boyhood, in manhood, and with an even greater gladness in my age.

Dr J. F. Waller, long resident in London, had formerly lived in Dublin. He had been a frequent contributor to the 'University' during the years when Ferguson also wrote much in that Magazine. In acknowledgment of a copy of 'Poems' sent to Dr Waller, Ferguson received from him the following letter:—

4 MONTPELIER SQUARE, LONDON, S.W.,
June 9, 1880.

MY DEAR SAM (for old friendship must discard the formality of addressing you by your title),—On my return to London on Monday evening I found the kind present of your book of 'Poems' awaiting me. A very gratifying gift it is to me, as its inscription tells of "old affection and

recollection," and that recollection carries me back to the year 1830 or 1831, when I first formed an acquaintance with you that has now endured for near half a century. As Beaconsfield says, "a great many things have happened since then." You have beaten me in the race of life, and of that I do not complain, but heartily rejoice in your honourable success. We are now severed and can meet but seldom, yet I trust our friendship will continue unimpaired to the last.

I have read a great part of your book with great pleasure. All the poems of the 'Western Gael' are admirable. "The Little Maiden" is charming. But I'm not going to criticise. My heart is too near yours for that. . . . Present my best respects to Lady Ferguson, and believe me, my dear Sam, your affectionate friend, J. F. WALLER.

MY DEAR FRIEND [wrote the Rev. Robert Perceval Graves], —Accept my best thanks for "Deirdré," and also for your kind inscription, which I value highly.

"Deirdré" deserves thus to stand singly in the comely dress you have given her. The night before I received this copy I had been reading the poem in the collection, and feeling continual admiration for the vigour and clearness with which you had brought the history out in dramatic form. It has the clearness of good narrative and the vigour of drama. I don't know any poet who can make a single word carry more meaning; but that is not all—carry forward *more action* is a peculiar merit, and it is yours. The story is an affecting one, of much beauty, dignity, and pathos. . . . —Believe me ever faithfully yours, R. P. GRAVES.

The opinions of poets, contemporaries, and friends have now been given—Allingham, de Vere, Bennett, MacCarthy, Waller, and Robert Perceval Graves. But Ferguson experienced a new and joyous sensation when he found the young Irish poets gathering around him, and looking up to him as one whose example had

stimulated and set before them a high standard—a nobler ambition than mere personal success. He pointed out the ends at which they should aim, "their Country's, their God's, and Truth's"; and encouraged their efforts by sympathy and counsel. Instances of this have been given in previous chapters. Here will be cited only Mr W. B. Yeats's article in the 'Dublin University Review,' November 1886, on "The Poetry of Sir Samuel Ferguson," and the criticism which appeared in 'The Reflector' of April 14, 1888, by Mr Alfred Perceval Graves.

If Samuel Ferguson [wrote Yeats] had written of Arthur and of Guinevere, they [his readers] would have received him gladly: that he chose rather to tell of Congal and of desolate and queenly Deirdré, we give him full-hearted thanks; he has restored to our hills and rivers their epic interest. The nation has found in Davis a battle-call, as in Mangan its cry of despair; but he only, the one Homeric poet of our time, could give us immortal companions still wet with the dew of their primal world. . . .

"The Twins of Macha" and "The Naming of Cuchullin" give us the key-note of his work — that simplicity which is force. He is never florid, never for a moment rhetorical. We see at once that he has the supreme gifts of the story-teller—imagination enough to make history read like romance, and simplicity enough to make romance read like history. . . .

We now come to "Deirdré," which I hold to be the greatest of Sir Samuel Ferguson's poems. . . . In "Deirdré" he has restored to us a fragment of the buried Odyssey of Ireland.

I have not space to do much more than mention the next two poems. Though lucid and beautiful, they are of much less importance than "Deirdré" or "Conary." In these latter the wave of song reaches its greatest volume of sound and strength. In the "Healing of Conall Carnach" it ebbs

with soft notes that are almost idyllic, and with a half-regretful prophecy of change. . . .

In thus describing these poems I have not sought to convey to my readers, for it were hopeless, their fine momentum, the sign-manual of the great writers. . . .

The author of these poems is the greatest poet Ireland has produced, because the most central and most Celtic. Whatever the future may bring forth in the way of a truly great and national literature—and now that the race is so large, so widely spread, and so conscious of its unity, the years are ripe—will find its morning in these three volumes of one who was made by the purifying flame of national sentiment the one man of his time who wrote heroic poetry,—one who, among the somewhat sybaritic singers of his day, was like some aged sea-king sitting among the inland wheat and poppies—the savour of the sea about him, and its strength.

Mr A. P. Graves has entitled his article which appeared in the 'Reflector' in April 1888 "Has Ireland a National Poet?"

We do not use the term national in the sense of belonging to the Nationalist party in Ireland. . . . We wished to make use of our word national, as distinguished from Nationalist, clear from the very outset. . . .

Tom Moore is a poet by virtue of his Irish Melodies, but he never was and never will be accepted by Ireland as her national poet in the sense that Burns has been accepted by the Scotch. Had the circumstances of James Clarence Mangan's life been different, he might possibly have earned the title for a time. But we believe that under the most favourable conditions he would have been obliged to concede it to another writer, whom only now that he has been taken from their midst Irish critics of every shade of political opinion are agreeing to honour by this distinction. That writer is Sir Samuel Ferguson. In him, they say, and we believe justly, their country has at last found a poet who can worthily express the national character in its noblest

aspects—aspects which Ireland has, alas! latterly only too often lost sight of. Here is a Belfast man of a fine old Presbyterian stock, who, marvellous to relate, has had the sense to eschew politics in verse, and the magnanimity to study with affection and express with truth the finest characteristics of the Southern and Western Celt. . . . No writer who has dared an English epic in this century has, in our opinion, succeeded, with the sole exception of Ferguson. . . . He has ventured a complete epic poem in his "Congal Claen."

An epic requires a great subject, and he who writes it must have vision and virility closely allied in his nature, else how can he realise the heroic ideal? We claim these as Ferguson's pre-eminent qualities. He is virile. His heroes proclaim it in their every action, their every utterance, and his tender portrait of Lafinda could only have been drawn by a gallant gentleman. He has vision. The terrible shapes of Celtic superstition—the Giant Walker, the Washer of the Ford—loom monstrously before us as he sings, and he marshals the contending hosts at Moyra with a magnificent realism to which we know no modern parallel. And his subject? It is a great old-world tale of love, and hate, and jealousy, and ambition, and craft, and courage,—a splendid story of the last heroic stand made by Celtic Paganism against the Irish Champions of the Cross. But let our readers judge for themselves whether the following extracts from "Congal" alone do not prove Ferguson to have reached heights hitherto unattained by any Irish poetical writer—heights which justly entitle him to rank as the national poet of Ireland.

In May 1894 the Hon. Roden Noel, himself a poet of distinction, delivered before the Irish Literary Society in London a lecture on "The Poetry of Sir Samuel Ferguson." It was his last public utterance. Before the end of the month the interpreter

of a brother poet, personally unknown to him, had passed

> "Into the land of the great departed,
> Into the Silent Land."

Mr Noel's lecture, as already mentioned, was read by Miss Hickey to a Dublin audience in January 1895, Lord Plunket, Archbishop of Dublin, presiding; and speeches were made by him, and by Dr Ingram, Sir William Stokes, the Master of the Rolls, Lord Justice Fitzgibbon, the Rev. J. P. Mahaffy, and Professor Dowden. Mr Noel's lecture contained the following critical estimate of Ferguson's work:—

The poetry of Ferguson is human, unaffected, sincere, without mannerism, remarkable for economy of power and parsimony of epithet, concentrated, firm in outline, with a strong grip upon the chosen theme, vivid and graphic in delineation, constructed with the utmost artistic skill, symmetrical proportion of parts, and general unity of effect; now and again moving us profoundly by a touch of unforced and thrilling pathos, all the more telling for this economy of power and use of the simplest means to produce the effect intended; sometimes profoundly tragic, and now and again instinct with the fairy glamour or shadowy sublimities of the early Celto-mythopœic genius. Ferguson's learned researches led him, a congenial spirit, a bard of olden time reincarnate or revived, passing through those archaic portals of the mystic letter—led him, as it were, into long-deserted and silent halls, into the very presence-chamber of the Irish genius, built like walls of Ilion to the sound of song, whereinto entering he found the very harp of Tara, and the chord of that harp he alone was found worthy to awaken, till new song-chambers akin to those enchanted labyrinths of the past were by him linked on to the harmonious tale. "Congal" and the shorter Irish heroic poems combine in a striking manner the vague,

undefined, shadowy grandeur, the supernatural glamour of northern romance, with the self-restraint, distinct symmetrical outline, ordered proportion, and organic construction of the Greek classic. . . .

The poetry of Ferguson is in one respect akin to the distinctively modern poetry of nature, though with a difference. He has entered into the mythological conceptions of nature common to primitive and pagan races, and has been able to express this so strikingly by means of that peculiarly modern poetic sensitiveness to the spiritual and psychical implications in eternal nature, which is a note of our own time. Ferguson's well-related groups of typical human figures stand forth solid and vivid from a background of appropriate scenery, as you find them in the classical poets.

This chapter may fitly close with two utterances of Ferguson himself. The first, a letter to the Rev. M. Russell, S.J., editor of the 'Irish Monthly Magazine,' written from Tenby, South Wales, in July 1884:—

Let me thank you for your obliging letter, enclosing Mr de Vere's note, which reached me while on vacation in the country. I have also heard from Judge O'Hagan, who tells me you contemplate the insertion of a second notice of my poems. It is very grateful to me to find appreciation among my own countrymen. It has hitherto been almost totally denied me in the great centres of criticism in England. Possibly de Vere divines the true cause. My business is, regardless of such discouragements, to do what I can in the formation of a characteristic school of letters for my own country. For the sympathy and encouragement you give me accept my warmest thanks.

The second is taken from an autobiographical fragment dictated to his wife many years ago at her request. In this unfinished sketch, which is incor-

porated here and there in the present memoir, Ferguson thus speaks of his aims and aspirations:—

I have nothing to note outside the ordinary routine of my practice at the Bar, where I received my silk gown in 1859, until 1864, when I published my 'Lays of the Western Gael,' followed in 1872 by "Congal," an epic poem of greater length and higher literary pretension. Whether the high place and permanence as part of our national literature aimed at in these works will be ultimately attained must be left to the test of time. At present the cultured criticism of the day is averse to the Irish subject in any form, and the uncultured will not have it save in that form of helotism in which I at least will not present it.

CHAPTER XXV.

1834–1886.

HIS WORK AS A MEMBER OF THE ROYAL IRISH ACADEMY.

"I looked beyond the world for truth and beauty:
Sought, found, and did my duty."
—BROWNING.

THE Royal Irish Academy, originated by gentlemen of scholarly tastes in 1782, was incorporated by Royal Charter four years later, for the study of Science, Polite Literature, and Antiquities in Ireland. Its great services to science are universally recognised; but those which it has rendered to antiquarian studies will alone be referred to here, as Sir Samuel Ferguson, who became a member in 1834, devoted his energies in especial to its literary and archæological department.

To collect, preserve, transcribe, and translate the early monuments of her literary past, of which Ireland may well be proud, was an important part of the work of the Academy. The 'Leabhar na-h Uidhri,' 'Leabhar Breac,' the 'Book of Ballymote,' the 'Book

of Lecan,' are among the many works in the Irish tongue of various ages, from the earliest dawn of literature to the seventeenth century, collected and preserved mainly in the Library of the Royal Irish Academy.

The country is indebted to her distinguished son Edmund Burke for the restoration of the manuscript of the "Brehon Laws," now in the Library of Trinity College, of which a transcript was made for the Academy.

In the collection of books and manuscripts, as well as of ancient weapons, ornaments, and other objects of goldsmith's work, the chief impetus was due to Dr Petrie, who became a member of the Council in 1830. Under his influence the Academy made grants of money from time to time, and when these proved inadequate, Petrie purchased at his own cost MSS. which would otherwise have been lost to Ireland, and, refusing large offers from private collectors, gave them to the Academy at the price for which he had secured them. Amongst these were MSS. in the handwriting of the O'Clerys, one of them being an autograph copy of the second part of the 'Annals of the Four Masters.'

Thus stimulated, the Irish public contributed generously, mindful when occasion arose of the duty of preserving the ancient literature and antiquities of their country. The Government also, as has been already mentioned, yielded with enlightened consideration to the representations of Sir Samuel Ferguson—

at the time President of the Academy—when he urged the claim of Ireland to that portion of the Ashburnham MSS. purchased by the nation which belonged to her history and were written in the Gaelic tongue.

To the munificence of some among its members the Academy is indebted for many of the precious objects in its Museum. The processional cross of Cong—an exquisite specimen of goldsmith work made for Turlogh O'Connor, father to Roderic, last king of Ireland; the golden torques found at Tara; the Domnach-Airgid, a reliquary with a copy of the Gospels said to have been brought by St Patrick into Ireland, and given by him to Saint MacCarthen, first bishop of Clogher,—are among its treasures. The three cases—of yew, of copper plated with silver, and of silver plated with gold—which enshrine the Domnach, illustrate the art of the sixth, twelfth, and fourteenth centuries. These, and other gems of Irish art, are now exhibited in the New Dublin Museum of Science and Art, the Academy having acceded to the wish of the Government and transferred its rich collections, on the condition that all these objects shall be retained in Ireland for the public benefit, and exhibited in a room of the New Museum devoted to them alone. The transfer of the collection did not take place till after the New Museum had been opened to the public on the 29th of August 1890.

Ferguson was in his twenty-fourth year when he was elected a member of the Royal Irish Academy, March 15, 1834.

My Academic services [he wrote] began in 1836 with the identification of the then novel "boomerang" with the *cateia* of Virgil. My latest of a long series of papers on lapidary, especially Ogham inscriptions, and other subjects of archæological criticism, is an elucidation of an obscure passage in Pliny by the light of ancient Irish authorities.

Thenceforward he was devoted to its interests, giving time, and thought, and contributions to its publications throughout the ensuing fifty-two years. During the last years of his life he had the honour—one he highly prized—to be its President.

From his Presidential Addresses, and from those of his immediate successors, the Rev. Samuel Haughton and Dr Ingram, the work done by the Academy from its inception to the present time may be traced. Its first President was James, Earl of Charlemont. His grandson, nearly a century later, presented to the Academy MSS. in the handwriting of the leader of the Volunteers. Sir Samuel Ferguson, in acknowledging the "Charlemont Presentation," gives an interesting sketch of the career of the great Lord Charlemont:—

It gives me pleasure to inform the Academy that an important addition has been made to our manuscript collections, in the twenty-three volumes on the table, presented to us by the Earl of Charlemont.

The Academy will better judge of the nature and value of this noble donation from the letter of the Earl of Charlemont which accompanied it. . . .

"ROXBOROUGH, MOY, CO. TYRONE,
27th May 1882.

"To the PRESIDENT of the Royal Irish Academy.

"SIR, — I have the honour to present to the Royal Irish Academy twenty-three manuscript volumes, seven in folio size and sixteen in quarto, the seven folios containing original literary works of my grandfather, all in his own handwriting. These, I am sure, will be prized by the Academy as proofs of the literary taste and learning of their first President; and I am gratified to think that in their library they are placed where they will serve to perpetuate and enhance my grandfather's memory amongst his fellow-countrymen. . . .

"CHARLEMONT."

These memorials of our first President possess a special interest for us, who still benefit by the enlightened spirit of learning and research to which our charter, obtained by him and the other founders of the Academy, has given form, consistency, and permanence. But they possess a wider interest for those who care to look on the record of studies and pursuits which, in his case, have been instrumental in the formation of a magnanimous character, and in giving to his country a great man. For James, first Earl of Charlemont, who not only made Dublin, during his time, a centre of great intellectual activity and of elegant social enjoyment, but so moulded the moral and material forces of the whole country as to achieve that great economic and constitutional victory won by him now just a hundred years ago, will be entitled to the name of a great man as long as these islands possess a history. If you look into this record of his thoughts to learn what were the agencies that chiefly conduced to the formation of his character, you will see what a prominent part polite literature and the fine arts had in its development. In the classic poetry of Greece and Italy he found the congenial expression of grand ideas. Painting, sculpture, and architecture gave, so to speak, strength and symmetry to the constructions of his judgment. These influences are now changed. The classical school of poetry he graduated in has given place to a less stately, though perhaps

more beautiful, form of song. The regular, majestic architecture in which he delighted, strong, elegant, and dignified, as we see it in the palaces raised by him and others of his contemporaries in and near our city, has been exchanged for a very different and less easily described style of building. The political edifice he constructed endured but for eighteen years. You may read in one of these volumes the thoughtful estimate of those imperfections which led, within so short a time, to its replacement by the wider constitution under which we live. But while these things have passed away, the Academy subsists, full of vitality, and still daily doing honour to its founders throughout all the encyclopædic field secured for it by his wisdom and that of his associates in the obtaining of our charter, and which I heartily pray may never be narrowed.

The Academy has for three generations continued to be an object of friendly solicitude to the noble house of Caulfield. To the second Earl we are indebted for the *terra-cotta* busts of the Roman emperors which adorn our library,—no castings from a mould, but modelled directly from the originals by the hands of the sculptor. Now we find the third inheritor of the title enriching us with these further donations, which I do not doubt the Academy will suitably acknowledge.

In 1876, during the Presidency of Dr Stokes, certain changes were proposed by the Government which were strenuously opposed by the Academy. Its governing members approved of a petition to Parliament in which their grievances were stated. A few paragraphs will best explain their action and the circumstances which led to it:—

In the month of February last a communication, bearing date the 9th of that month, was received from the Right Honourable Lord Sandon, Vice-President of the Committee on Education of her Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council, announcing to the Academy that her Majesty's Government had approved of a scheme framed by that

Committee, including a proposal for the transfer of the antiquarian collections known as the Academy's Museum to a Science and Art Museum in Dublin to be provided by the State, under a director who should be an officer of the branch of that Committee known as the Science and Art Department, and who would act as accounting officer for all the votes of public money, and be the medium of communication with the said Department.

Your petitioners, considering that their collections do not constitute an Industrial or Art Museum within the objects of the Commission of 1869, hereinafter referred to, and that the Science and Art Department is a branch of the Committee of her Majesty's Privy Council on Education, whereas the Royal Irish Academy is not an educational institution, but a learned body entitled, as it conceives, to the same status with the other learned societies of the United Kingdom, which have not been, in this or any other manner, subordinated to the Science and Art Department, in consenting so to transfer its collections, stipulated, amongst other conditions, that the Academy should be accountable, as at present, to her Majesty's Treasury, through the Irish Government, for all sums voted by Parliament, and should not be subject, in the conduct of its affairs, or the expenditure of its grants, to any control on the part of the Science and Art Department, or any of its officers.

Your petitioners, considering that not only are the grants of public money voted to kindred scientific societies in England and Scotland not issued through the Science and Art Department, but that the sums allocated by your Honourable House in support of the national Collections of Antiquities in England and Scotland are accounted for by the Trustees of the British Museum and the Scottish Board of Trustees respectively, without any control or interference from the said Department; considering, also, that they cannot accept such change of the medium through which they should transmit their estimates and receive their issues, without placing in the hands of said Department a control over their action in the higher pursuits of learning altogether out of the

sphere of said Department, fatal to their independence and detrimental to their usefulness,—have declined, and must continue to decline, to apply for any issue of said grant through said Department, whereby said grant will remain unused, and the intention of your Honourable House in voting same be further disappointed.

Issues of said grant are urgently required for the necessary purposes of the Royal Irish Academy, which, if long deprived of same, must greatly reduce its establishment, and contract its means of promoting the objects of its charter.

Ferguson wrote on the subject to Dr Stokes as follows:—

18th February 1876.

My dear President,—It is vital to the Academy that we should be unanimous in our advice on Lord Sandon's letter. I have, as conscientiously as I can, put down the advice that I think we ought to give. If it can be brought to square with what you consider right, and if Dr Ingram (whose opinions I should be inclined to defer to almost as much) and our ex-president Jellett could be induced to see the case in the same, or substantially the same, light, I think no one at our Council table would be likely to dissent.

I enclose three copies, one for yourself and one for each of the others, which, if you can accompany with your own approval, modified as you might think fit, would give an opportunity for agreement among the minds most likely to influence our destinies.—Believe me, with sincere affection, yours,

Samuel Ferguson.

87 St George's Square, London,
16th April 1876.

My dear President,— . . . I regret that these engagements will prevent my being present when the Council of the Academy will have to consider the amalgamation project. The individuality and integrity of the Academy are the primary and, I would consider, the indispensable conditions to be insisted on.

Lord Sandon's letter gave us to understand that the object desired was to get our collections into a museum of larger dimensions, where they would form part of a national display. We are willing to put them there, and may fairly ask, What more would our rulers have? . . .

It is plain to me, from the temper of the Academy, that they would rather submit to a curtailment of their means than to any derogation from their scholastic and scientific supremacy; and in this resolve I trust the Council will give them a loyal and unfaltering support.—Believe me to remain, as always, my dear President, your faithful associate, SAML. FERGUSON.

Ferguson, when himself President, watched no less anxiously over the interests of the Academy. In July 1882 he wrote to the Rev. S. Haughton as follows:—

As I am about leaving home for my vacation, and movements prejudicial to the interests of the Academy may be made in my absence, I wish that the Vice-President, on whom the first duty of protecting these interests will devolve, should be in possession of my sentiments regarding the inexpediency of erecting any rival society or otherwise tampering with our charter. If you should have to leave the neighbourhood of town before my return, I would ask you to hand this note to the Vice-President next in seniority who may happen to be on the spot, in order that if anything overt take place, no time may be lost in convening Council, and laying its views before the Irish Government.

Before sanctioning the establishment of a rival society, the Lord Lieutenant should be satisfied that such a rivalry is required by some defect in the constitution or in the practical working of the Academy; and the *onus* of establishing this lies on the promoters of the rival project. The constitution of the Academy, analogous to that of the *Institut* of France, has worked well since its foundation, now nearly a century ago. Its most brilliant periods have been those in which activity prevailed in all its departments. Sir William Hamilton's researches in science are concurrent with Dr Hincks's

in philology and Dr Petrie's in antiquities. The fact that the present President has been chosen from the Literary side has not diminished the activity of the Scientific section, the papers in which, at the present time, are of distinguished value and more than ordinarily numerous.

The gentlemen who are understood to promote the new scheme are, with one unfortunate exception which no one regrets more than I do, members of the Academy. None of them can allege that any communication of his has ever failed to receive an appreciative consideration by the Academy, or has ever been slighted by the Committee of Publication; or that his own scientific status as a member has ever been denied its due recognition by a seat on the Council,—although true it is the Council has not received with favour the proposals these gentlemen have from time to time put forward for recasting the internal arrangements of the Academy, in such a manner as it was feared would isolate its several sections and break up the encyclopædic character of its meetings.

I am at a loss to see how any scientific speculation can suffer discouragement by being brought forward in the presence of a body of learned men comprising antiquaries as well as men of science, which is, I believe, the main objection urged by these gentlemen against the Academy and in favour of the innovation they desire.

Ferguson strongly opposed, on behalf of the Academy, what he called "a tenemental occupation" of rooms in Leinster House. He wished to be independent. But he sincerely desired the prosperity of the Royal Dublin Society, and valued its services to Ireland in the promotion of the useful arts, and also in art and architecture:—

Another part of the arrangement contemplated at the time of the Academy assenting to the transfer of its Museum was, that it should change its abode to Leinster House, where

suitable apartments should be provided for it. We have, at all times since our foundation, been provided by the State with a house: first, in our old residence in Grafton Street; afterwards, in the fine old mansion, altered and enlarged for our purposes, in which we are now assembled. Speaking for myself, I own that the prospect of that arrangement being altered to a kind of tenemental occupation, even in a much superior building, is not a pleasing one. The Royal Dublin Society will always, I trust, be a body of sufficient numbers and consideration to occupy to advantage so much of its old palace as may not be required for departmental purposes; and I think I express the general feeling of the Academy in saying that, while we wish the sister society the fullest enjoyment of that honourable position, we desire on our own part to remain self-contained in our lodgings, as we mean to keep ourselves independent in our pursuits.

In his Inaugural Address delivered before the Academy on the 30th of November 1882, Sir Samuel appealed to the members of the Royal Dublin Society in the following words:—

The domain of Taste—whether artistic, architectural, or æsthetic—is a free field, in which teaching *ex cathedra* carries no more authority than the critical judgments of individual refinement; and we will still look to our educated classes at large, and particularly to the members of the Royal Dublin Society, not only to aid in the promotion of every useful art, but to contribute the influences of independent taste in the fine arts towards the general amenities of our city and country. The true schools of the fine arts in all countries have been the abodes of individual men of genius, sustained by the presence of a rich and splendid society. Whether we shall ever again possess such a class of patrons as called forth the artistic and architectural excellence of the last century no one can foresee, but it needs no prevision to perceive that genius, although a classroom may bring it into notice, is not a thing that can be taught.

And of a far higher wisdom he thus speaks:—

Knowledge of the laws which govern the fertility of the soil and the serenity of the atmosphere may conduce to make human life easier, and bring down the high price which man must pay for leave to live. Still, the

> "*Audax omnia perpeti*
> *Gens humana*"

will remain the old sons of Adam, to whom the control of the elements, if they could attain it, would be as nothing in real value compared with the control of their own desires and passions; and for whose enlightenment in a higher wisdom than that of *Calculus* or *Quaternion*—in the wisdom which makes life happy and beautiful, even if it be laborious—philosophy and history and poetry have been softening manners and gladdening the hours of leisure ever since the boon of letters was first bestowed on mankind. With these companions Science walked accompanied in the Grove of Academus, and walks still so accompanied in many of the first Academies of Europe, and, if I have rightly divined your minds, I rejoice to believe that I am here as an exponent of your will that in the Royal Irish Academy they shall not be separated.

Ferguson, in this address to the Academy, enlarged on the importance of the work on which their scribes were engaged in the facsimile reproductions of the ancient books, and the accumulation of material for the compilation of an Irish Dictionary:—

The growth of philological study, and the labours of Zeuss in collecting from the Irish material of the Continental libraries the elements of a vocabulary and grammar of the ancient language, had given a new value to our old Irish books and a corresponding stimulus to Academic enterprise. For I cannot employ a better word in describing the immense labour about that time entered on by the Council, in commencing the

transcription in facsimile of our most ancient Irish manuscripts, and so placing them at once at the disposal of Continental scholars. So great and so successful has our progress been in this vast work, that Mr Gilbert, its most active originator, may justly be awarded a large share of the honour and thanks due to your Council and to the successive Committees by whom the transcription has been carried forward. Our Scribe, the last of an hereditary class, lived to complete in this manner the reproduction of the text of the Books of Uidhri, Breac, and Leinster—the last the property of Trinity College, which noble institution shared with us the expense of the transcription and publication. It has been edited by our colleague, Dr Atkinson, whose prefatory survey of the contents reveals the greatest storehouse of middle-age Irish literature yet thrown open to scholars. Since the death of Mr O'Longan we have been obliged to abandon the pen facsimile and resort to the slower and more difficult process of photography for the smoke-darkened and much-thumbed vellum of the 'Book of Ballymote,' which we hope may be completed in about three years. The vellum of the 'Book of Lecan' is comparatively clean, and we may look for its reproduction in a shorter time. Others no doubt will follow; and it is not an over-sanguine forecast that, within the next ten years, the whole bulk of the old native Irish literature will be in the hands of scholars all over the world.

But without an adequate Dictionary the progress of students in our Middle Irish material must be almost as slow and laborious as we may imagine Zeuss's to have been when he first began the interpretation of his glosses. There are at the present time but a very few men — their names might be numbered almost on the fingers of one hand—to whom the older texts are plenarily intelligible; and that, in every instance, only by the help of vocabularies of their own compiling. The Dictionaries we have are more unsuited for these texts than Johnson would be for Chaucer. If the word sought for should happen to be there—a rare contingency—it will, in most cases, be found disguised under an artificial spelling of its first syllable, according to a rule of what may

be called "vocalic balance," devised since the language became confined to a section of the populace, and in their mouths underwent that process of structural degradation which makes the spoken Irish of the present day so ill-defined and slippery in its fluency. Whether and to what extent the Dictionary we require shall follow these Protean vocalisms, or shall give the words of our vellum manuscripts in their original forms, will be a question for the Editor to whose hands the preparation of material for the work has been confided by Council. A large mass of such material has already been accumulated. Windisch at Leipzic, and Zimmer at Berlin, have given their aid abroad. At home, the contributions of Dr Whitley Stokes, whether in our 'Transactions' or elsewhere, besides supplying examples of perfect English employed in racy and characteristic translation, are all enriched with glossaries available for the compilation. Every Todd lecture delivered here by Professor Hennessy contributes supplies of the same kind. Under the direction of the Secretary of Council, a process has for a considerable time been in operation of extracting every leading word in the old texts hitherto published, with enough of its context to verify its several meanings—a great undertaking, but not disproportionate to the larger objects we may reasonably hope to attain to through its instrumentality. Where we now have a few students, painfully making their way through the facsimiles, with the illusory and disappointing encumbrance, rather than aid, of our present Dictionaries, we may reasonably expect that then we shall have numerous scholars in all the chief seats of letters eager in the exploration of things as new, at least, in literature as were the contributions of the cloisters at the revival of learning. Fragments of Continental song and tradition may still remain unpublished in obscure repositories, but all the solid literary documents of every country of Europe have been for centuries collected, annotated, and put to the uses of philosophic thought, save only those of Ireland. What had been done for us in this direction, up to the time of our entering on our present Academic enterprise, was mainly the work of individuals. The name of Richard, second Duke of Buckingham, at whose expense O'Connor

published his 'Rerum Hibernicarum Scriptores Veteres,' ought always to be regarded with affectionate gratitude by the Irish people. O'Donovan and Curry had added to it vast stores of exposition, and many selected examples of new material; but this undertaking of the Academy is the first systematic and comprehensive exploration of the whole field. . . .

But, unless the diffusion of these new materials results in something more solid and socially influential than pure criticism, the object which has animated so many minds in accumulating and preserving them will be but imperfectly attained. For, if there ever was a legitimate patriotic hope at the bottom of scholastic effort, it animated the men who brought these things together and put them in their present posture and capacity for use. That this country should be without an adequate History and without a characteristic Literature rising above the conventional Irish buffooneries, has been a source of pain and humiliation to educated Irishmen for generations; and it is to the stimulus of that reflection, not less than to the love of letters for their own sake, that we owe what we have accomplished, and the prospect of all that we yet may achieve. So far as concerns a general History of the country, we must, probably, be content to let the work for the present rest in preparation and material. If the time had arrived when Ireland could be said to have taken one or other definite position, from which her past could be contemplated in distinct, unshifting perspective, we might be more impatient of delay. But it seems to me that no great History of any country has ever been written from any but a fixed point of contemplation, not attainable in transitional times, such as ours for so great a length of time unhappily have been. Essays, having much of the solidity and dignity of history, may be framed in this view and in that, according to the point the writer would desire to see become the fixed one; but till some pause in the ever-oscillating course of our destiny shall take place, a philosophic retrospect, on a large scale, of Irish affairs is hardly to be looked for. It is true, the history of even the most fortunate countries must be a record of flux and reflux,

but the season in which the Historian achieves his work is, I fancy, at high tide. . . .

Recent events have given to the older races in this country a considerable advancement in wealth and social status; and it cannot but be that the change will excite a desire for, as it will increase the means of procuring, a higher literature of their own. As regards the rest of the population, including the bulk of the upper and educated classes, if they do not count as many generations to their first settlers and *eponymi*, they are, at least as far as birth on Irish soil goes, most of them by many centuries more Irish than were the great-grandsons of Milesius—himself but the Strongbow of an earlier conquest. All of them have been here long enough to take root, and they have no intention of going out. They have imbibed, whether from social or from cosmical influences, an Irishism of their own, and assert their claim to a full participation in every honour that this country can confer on its children or they on it. They yield to none of their countrymen in the desire, and they greatly excel the bulk of them in the ability, to make Ireland once again a home of Arts and Letters. The works of this Academy can testify to what they have been able to achieve in that direction during nearly a century of patriotic endeavour. To their hands mainly has been committed the guardianship of the materials out of which such a literature as I have been contemplating may be evolved; and in their hands, mainly, the work of speeding that development now rests in this Academy. But all will depend on the preliminary accomplishment of a sufficient Dictionary; and if that work be completed during my occupation of this chair, I shall retire from it with feelings of high self-gratulation at having been partaker in a labour which promises such an accession of honourable distinction to my country.

Of the many friendships formed and cemented at the Academy's meetings, a few not hitherto dwelt on may here be mentioned.

The late Sir William Wilde was a man of genial

and kindly nature, and an ardent archæologist. He rendered many services to his country. His work as Census Commissioner was of great importance. His interesting books, 'The Boyne and Blackwater' and 'The Shores of Lough Corrib,' describe some of her ancient monuments. He gave "the gratuitous labour of years" to the arrangement and cataloguing of the objects preserved in the museum of the Royal Irish Academy, of which he was an active member. He died in April 1876, and Ferguson, then in Oxford, wrote of the sad event to his wife, on the 20th of April:—

I read in the 'Times' that poor dear Wilde left his castle of the Thrievé and all his buildings thereon yesterday. Alas! how short a span it is, and so much to do, and to undo in wish and retribution! May the poor spirit have peace, and his good deeds not be forgotten!

Ferguson expressed his feelings in a poem, from which a few passages are extracted:—

DEAR WILDE.

AN ELEGY, 1876.

Dear Wilde, the deeps close o'er thee; and no more
Greet we or mingle on the hither shore,
Where other footsteps now must print the sand,
And other waiters by the margin stand.
Gone; and alas! too late it wrings my breast,
The word unspoken, and the hand unpressed;
Yet will affection follow, and believe
The sentient spirit may the thought receive,
Though neither eye to eye the soul impart,
Nor answering hand confess the unburthened heart.

Gone; and alone rests for me that I strive
In song sincere to keep thy name alive,
Though nothing needing of the aids of rhyme,
While they who knew thee tread the ways of time,
And cherish, ere their race be also run,
Their memories of many a kindness done—
Of the quick look that caught the unspoken need,
And back returned the hand's benignant deed
In help or healing, or with ardour high
Infused the might of patriot-sympathy.
And when we all have followed, and the last
Who loved thee living shall have also passed,
This crumbling castle, from its basement swerved,
Thy pious under-pinning skill preserved;
That carven porch from ruined heaps anew
Dug out and dedicate by thee to view
Of wond'ring modern men who stand amazed
To think their Irish fathers ever raised
Works worthy such a care; this sculptured cross
Thou gatheredst piecemeal, every knop and boss
And dragon-twisted symbol, side by side
Laid, and to holy teachings reapplied;
Those noble jewels of the days gone by
The goldsmith's and the penman's art supply,
With rarest products of progressive man
Since civil life in Erin first began:

. . . . . .

These all will speak thee; and, dear Wilde, when these,
In course of time, by swift or slow degrees,
Are also perished from the world, and gone,
The green grass of Roscommon will grow on:
And, though our several works of hand and pen,
Our names and memories, be forgotten then,
Oft as the cattle in the dewy day
Of tender morn, by Tulsk or Castlerea,
Crop the sweet herbage, or adown the vale
The ruddy milkmaid bears her evening pail;
Oft as the youth to meet his fair one flies

At labour's close, where sheltering hawthorns rise
By Suck's smooth margin; or the merry round
Of dancers foot it to the planxty's sound,
And some warm heart, matched with a mind serene,
Shall drink its full refreshment from the scene,
With thanks to God whose bounty brings to pass
That maids their sweethearts, and that kine their grass,
Find by His care provided, and there rise
Soft and sweet thoughts for all beneath the skies;—
Then, though unknown, thy spirit shall partake
Refreshment, too, for old communion's sake.

The poem was sent in MS. to Sir Thomas Larcom, who thus acknowledged it:—

HEATHFIELD, WAREHAM, 19*th May* 1876.

MY DEAR FERGUSON,—I take it as a great kindness that you have sent me a copy of your lines on Wilde. He was one of my oldest friends, and I deplore his loss more than I can describe.

I like the lines—I like the beginning—I admire the end—I like it all. They bring back to me D'Arcy M'Gee's "Monody on O'Donovan." There were giants in the land in those days. Alas! you will soon stand alone.

How does the Academy stand as to the Kensington proposal to swallow it? Twice—nay, thrice, I think—a similar move was successfully resisted. I do not know whether the cross to the Four Masters has been erected, and where. I saw in the Irish papers there was (as usual) a squabble on the site.

I love your "Congal" the oftener I look into it. There ought to be a memorial to Wilde, though I believe the work a man has done is his best memorial.—Yours, my dear Ferguson, always sincerely, THOMAS A. LARCOM.

Ferguson cordially recognised the services of Wilde, and when the Academy's collection of Celtic antiquities was about to be transferred to the New

Museum, urged that a bust of Sir William Wilde should be set in the new place of deposit along with that of its chief founder, Dr George Petrie.

Sir Samuel in his address to the Academy dwells on this topic when describing the great value and interest of the objects about to be handed over to the State in trust for the Irish people.

> One gallery at least of the Museum [said Ferguson], when it shall at length be established amongst us, will be amazingly rich and interesting to the Irish people—that, namely, which will contain the collection of Celtic antiquities now here in the Academy House. . . .
>
> In transferring our antiquarian collections, we have the satisfaction of knowing that we aid a great and, I trust, a very useful public object by a splendid contribution; and further, that we repay the advances of the State to the extent of above two thousand pounds of our private moneys from time to time sunk in the purchase and cataloguing of the objects themselves. The nucleus of our Museum was formed by voluntary donations and purchases out of our own income. . . . The whole price at which the collection has been acquired may be computed at between five and six thousand pounds. The mere material in gold and silver is intrinsically worth more than two thousand four hundred pounds. To estimate the artistic and historic value of the collection would be impossible. But celebrated and acknowledged, as it is, for the finest collection of its kind in existence, were it put up to auction to be bid for by the rival Governments and collectors of Europe and America, no one would be surprised should it sell for ten times its cost price; and if that at all approach the measure of its value, the Academy, in transferring it to the State, will go far to recoup the whole amount of all the subsidies it has received from Parliament. . . .
>
> The credit of having accumulated it rests with Council and with successive Committees, backed by the ever-ready liberality of the Academy and its friends. The late Sir William Wilde

was one of the most energetic of its promoters. He gave the gratuitous labour of years to its arrangement and cataloguing. If, when it goes to its new place of deposit, a bust of Wilde could be procured, to accompany it with the bust which we already possess of its chief founder, Petrie, it would be a gratification to those who witnessed his labours, and some small acknowledgment of the debt which his country owes him for services rewarded hitherto only by the memory of their value preserved among his old colleagues, and vaguely recognised by the public.

It has been stated in an Archæological Journal of authority that since Sir William Wilde's death the antiquarian collections here have fallen back into the chaos from which he rescued them. I give the most express denial to that statement. In the transfer and new deposit of our Museum which has been made since it ceased to benefit by Sir William Wilde's services, his arrangement, so far as it had gone, was piously preserved; every object he had recorded was identified with its place in the Catalogue and in the old Registers, and keys connecting the new and old places of deposit were made out with the utmost particularity for them all. Since then there have come into the house upwards of four thousand objects, every one of which at the time of its acquisition has been entered in the new Register, with particulars of place and circumstances of finding, wherever these could be ascertained; and for all objects which may come in, pending the transfer, like entries will be continued. If the Department should desire to prepare, for its own information, an authentic account of the commencement and progress of the Collection up to the time of transfer, I do not doubt that the Council will willingly give access to the minute-books and documents from which the facts may be obtained.

The friendship of Dr John Kells Ingram, Senior Fellow of Trinity College, Dublin, now President of the Royal Irish Academy, was prized and appreciated by Sir Samuel Ferguson, who admired his personal qualities, his simple, manly, unassuming character,

and his genius and great attainments in varied fields of knowledge. In poetry, Dr Ingram has given us one soul-stirring lyric, and a few sonnets only, but these evidence his fire and fervour. He has, however, chosen for his life-work other fields, and the mere titles of his publications evidence the wide range of his mental attainments. His principal writings, besides some addresses and a number of literary and philological papers in various journals, are 'A History of Political Economy' (1888), and 'A History of Slavery and Serfdom' (1895). Both these are expanded reproductions of articles which appeared in the 'Encyclopædia Britannica' (ninth edition). The former was received with much favour by the public in Great Britain and America, and has been translated into seven European languages. Dr Ingram has also edited from MSS. in the library of Trinity College, Dublin, and the University library, Cambridge, the earliest English translation of the 'De Imitatione Christi.'

As a Fellow of Trinity College, Dublin, and for many years librarian, and Regius Professor of Greek in the University, and as an energetic member of the Royal Irish Academy, he has had much practical work to do. But he has found leisure to devote to the service of others. Many inexperienced literary workers can testify to the aid, encouragement, critical counsel, correction of proof-sheets, and other kind acts entailing much time and trouble, freely given by Dr Ingram; and what greater proof of unselfish kindness can a learned man bestow?

When the Academy held its centenary celebration in May 1886, its President, Sir Samuel Ferguson, was hopelessly ill. Dr Ingram presided at the banquet and proposed the health of the Viceroy. In reply, the Earl of Aberdeen dwelt on the attainments of Dr Ingram, his high reputation, his services to the Academy, and the cordial feelings entertained towards him by its members—in words which will be echoed by all who have the privilege of knowing him.

Dr Ingram replied in a noble and stimulating speech, in which he alluded to James, Earl of Charlemont, and some of his distinguished successors in the chair of the Academy:—

The time at which the Academy was founded was a hopeful and expansive one—the public aspirations were high, and the national feeling had been strongly excited. The spirit of the time was well represented in Lord Charlemont, who was the first President of the Academy. The Irish aristocracy of the period have been, I think, rather hardly treated by some historians and politicians. Whatever may have been the radical unsoundness of their political position, they had some of the best qualities of aristocracies: they were patriotic; they were high-spirited and generous; they could appreciate wit, eloquence, literature, and art. Lord Charlemont was one of the best types of his class—he was, as has been said, at once a patriot and a Mæcenas; he had travelled much; he was an accomplished man, possessing, in particular, a thorough knowledge of Italian literature. When he was elected President, he did not merely wear the title as a feather in his cap; he devoted much time and energy to building up the Academy in its early years, and his name deserves to be held in honourable memory amongst us. The history of the Academy seems to fall naturally into three parts or periods. The first

period would end about the middle of the third decade of the present century. The principal figures of the time were Kirwan and Brinkley, men of real eminence—the one as a mineralogist and chemist, the other as an astronomer. This was a period of preparation and training rather than of achievement: the Academy was fostering the scientific and literary genius of the nation, but had not yet earned a European fame. Then came the wonderful outburst which began in the twenties of our century. I know few things in the history of intellect more remarkable than the movement which went on during the next twenty-five years, forming *the great period* of the Academy,—a movement which may be studied with pleasure and profit in two delightful books—Stokes's 'Life of Petrie' and Graves's 'Life of Hamilton.' During the brief period I have mentioned, a marvellous amount of memorable work was done. The leading figures on the stage were—Hamilton, M'Cullagh, Lloyd, and Petrie. Hamilton stood in the very foremost rank of mathematicians. There is nothing in recent mathematics to compare with his Calculus of Quaternions. M'Cullagh was more restricted to the field of pure geometry, but he had great geometrical resource, and the beauty of his methods and results was singularly attractive. Lloyd was a great physicist—in particular, terrestrial magnetism owes more to him, perhaps, than to any other man. Petrie was the great reformer of Irish Archæology, who dispelled the dreams of the Vallanceys and the Ledwiches, and founded an era of genuine inductive research. Now, the fame of all these men is indissolubly connected with that of the Academy, for almost all their most important discoveries were first announced at its meetings. This is true of Hamilton's deductive anticipation of the phenomenon of Conical Refraction—of his theory of Quaternions—of M'Cullagh's beautiful researches on Fresnel's Wave, and on the Surfaces of the Second Order—of Lloyd's experimental verification of Conical Refraction, of his Meteorology of Ireland, and of most of his memoirs on Magnetism; of Petrie's Hill of Tara, and his Ecclesiastical Architecture of Ireland. All these were brought before the Academy, and published in its 'Transactions.' Other most

valuable labours fell within the same limits of time—such as those of Todd, O'Donovan, and O'Curry, on the sources of Irish History and the Philology of the Irish Language, and those of Larcom on topography and local history. To the same period, too, belongs the first formation of our fine collection of national antiquities—now one of the chief glories of the Academy—which was made accessible to study by the Catalogue of Sir William Wilde. . . . To the members of our body it is sufficiently known who have done most to sustain the reputation of the Academy during the past generation: it is enough to say that most of them are gathered round our festive board to-day, as are also many of those who may be relied on to sustain its reputation in the years to come. Amongst the tasks which lie before the Academy in the future, there is one to which I wish to call attention, because it is urgent, and ought not to be postponed. The other branches of the Indo-European family of languages having now been sufficiently explored, the attention of philologists is becoming in a great degree concentrated on the Celtic tongues. By a grant from the Government, with some assistance from Trinity College, the Academy has been enabled to reproduce some of the most important ancient Irish texts, so as to make them available for the study of scholars, both at home and abroad. Now, the effect of the increasing study of these texts is to make more and more indispensable the production of a really good Irish dictionary, and the Council has undertaken this task. But it cannot be achieved without a vast amount of more or less mechanical labour, done under competent supervision; and the requisite funds to employ this labour are not forthcoming. I heartily wish some wealthy Irishman, emulating the noble liberality of Guinness and of Roe, would come forward and supply the means, and thus connect his name for ever with this great national enterprise. But, failing such intervention, the Council must proceed—however slowly—with the work, hoping that the Government will ere long see the propriety of pushing it forward by more effectual aid than is furnished by the present manuscript grant. There is no fear of want of useful work to be done

by Irishmen in the future, and I am confident there will be no lack of the intellectual ability required to do it. I am one of those who believe in a large undeveloped fund of Irish genius and talent, and I hope this Academy will always be one of the most potent agencies for evoking and encouraging it, and directing it to the highest and worthiest ends.

Letters from Dr Ingram and his charming wife were received by Lady Ferguson soon after her bereavement. In his communication Dr Ingram encouraged her to undertake the present work, as will appear by his letter of the 31st of August 1886:—

I must add a few words to what Mrs Ingram is saying. How deeply we feel the loss that you have sustained you will believe without any assurances from us. But in thinking of that loss, as I have very often done within the last few weeks, with the sense of it has always come the remembrance of his noble life and the enduring and precious work he has bequeathed to his country. These memories must help to support you, and enable you to bear up, as we hear you are admirably doing, against your great sorrow. You have already, we learn, been applying yourself to the preparation of the Rhind Lectures for the press. I venture to hope that, in addition to all else you were to your dear husband, you will one day be his biographer, and let the world fully know what he was, not only as a poet and a scholar, but as a man.

The Rev. Samuel Haughton, M.D., F.R.S., who succeeded Sir Samuel Ferguson in the Presidential Chair, R.I.A., is a man eminent in the scientific world, the author of 'Principles of Animal Mechanics,' 1873, and 'Lectures on Physical Geography,' 1880. He is Senior Fellow of Trinity College, Dublin, and he takes an active interest in the work of the Dublin Hospitals, and in the Zoological Gardens. He has found it a

difficult matter to raise the funds necessary for the support of the *Zoo*, and on an occasion when it was urgently in need of funds Professor Haughton called on his friends and fellow-citizens to become subscribers to the Institution.

I have applied in vain to the Bank of Ireland for an advance of one hundred pounds [he stated]. The directors have demurred, although I have offered ample security for twice the amount. I proposed to hand over and deposit with them a fine young tiger well worth two hundred pounds; but, strange to relate, they have declined my offer.

I was Secretary to the Zoological Gardens for more than twenty years [wrote Dr Haughton], and devoted many happy hours to the study of the animals living and dead.

One of the finest tigers in the collection has shown its gratitude for services rendered by the courageous and resourceful Professor. The beast—a noble specimen—was threatened with gangrene in its paw, the claw having become distorted and grown into the foot. It was believed that amputation would be necessary to save its life; but how to perform the operation was the question, and what surgeon would volunteer to beard the tiger in his den? Dr Haughton undertook the dangerous experiment. In conjunction with his *confrères* he devised a net-work which was thrown over the animal, his mate having been secured in a side-den. Thus entangled, the tiger was drawn forward to the partially opened door, its feet, excepting the diseased one, firmly held by the assistant surgeons in the net-work, so that the beast, though much excited, was unable to strike at the operator. The infuriated

animal had almost freed himself by a bound which brought his head in contact with the roof of his den, and blood flowed freely from the wound thus inflicted. The rage of the tigress looking on through the bars of the side-den was terrible. She flung herself against the barrier with an impetus which threatened to shatter it, and knocked off the hat of Professor Haughton. The efforts of the powerful beasts were, however, unavailing. The tiger was again drawn to the front, and the diseased paw operated on by Dr Haughton, who found it would suffice to cut away the offending claw, the suffering beast angrily endeavouring to strike at the operator who put him to so much pain. As soon as the wound was dressed and the network withdrawn the tigress was re-admitted. She had watched the surgical operation, and at once turned up the tiger's paw and inspected the work done; then she licked her mate, as a cat its kittens, and soothed him speedily, and soon the operators withdrew. A week later Dr Haughton was again at the *Zoo* to see how his patient got on. It was the dining hour of the carnivora, and the house was filled with children and other spectators. Professor Haughton kept in the background; but the animal espied him, and dropping the bone at which he was gnawing, began to purr like a cat, and rub himself against the bars. Seeing himself in this friendly fashion recognised, Dr Haughton came forward, got the keeper to open a part of the door of the den, and the tiger, still purring and rubbing his shoulder as a pleased cat is wont to do,

allowed the paw to be examined, and evidently recognised in the operator who had enraged him previously a benefactor to whom he desired to express gratitude for service done to him. "Next day, and for years after, the tigress showed herself most friendly and grateful for what I had done," writes Dr Haughton.

The Professor is a man of wit and racy humour, as becomes an Irishman, but is pre-eminently a man of science. To his grasp of a mathematical theorem he owes the hug of a Russian bear, bestowed at the conversazione of the Edinburgh Tercentenary in 1884. In truth the great Russian Mendelief—tall, long-haired, bearded, in fur cap, with academic robe profusely trimmed with fur — bore a striking resemblance to that animal. The distinguished Russian is the discoverer of an important mathematical law relating to the chemical elements; and when he found, to his great exultation, that the Irish Professor had mastered his scientific discovery, M. Mendelief in the crowded assembly suddenly extended his arms and embraced his brother scientist, kissing him on both cheeks with the greatest effusion. It was a homage to his genius which Dr Haughton would doubtless have willingly dispensed with. His astonished and dismayed looks could not but amuse his on-looking friends, even while they sympathised with the Russian's enthusiasm.

When Dr Haughton delivered in March 1887 his Presidential Address, he referred to Sir Samuel Ferguson in the following words:—

Gentlemen, Members of the Royal Irish Academy,—I have already thanked you for the high honour you have done me by electing me your President. Under the circumstances in which this election has taken place, it is fit that I should say a few words about my predecessor in this chair, whose lamented death has caused the vacancy which you have chosen me to fill.

Few members of the Academy knew our late President longer and more intimately than I did, and in what I now venture to say, I ask your pardon if private friendship may seem to colour my words too strongly.

In the first place, I wish to state, imperatively, that our late President was not (any more than I am myself) the mean hybrid for whom the title "West Briton" has been coined. He was intensely Irish, and in his younger days dangerously so—

"Si Pergama dextra
Defendi possent, etiam hac defensa fuissent."

He saw in time the impossibility (as others have done) of such methods, and devoted his life to the effort to win for Ireland, if possible, both in literature and science, the first place. His ideas are perhaps best expressed in his own words—

"The man aspires
To link his present with his country's past,
And live anew in knowledge of his sires;

No rootless Colonist of alien earth,
Proud but of patient lungs and pliant limb,
A stranger in the land that gave him birth,—
The land a stranger to itself and him."

In our late President's address, on the 30th November 1882, he dwells especially on the characteristics of this Academy, that it is not scientific or literary, but essentially both. Fifteen Presidents have preceded me in this chair, and of them, I think, it may be fairly said that, while some excelled both in science and literature, of none can it be said with truth that he was so exclusively devoted to either science

or literature as not to appreciate and prize the value of the other branch of knowledge. . . .

Sir Samuel Ferguson represented this Academy at the tercentenary of the University of Edinburgh in 1884, on which occasion he received the honorary degree of LL.D. from that University.

When, in the year 1883, the Lords of the Treasury agreed to the transfer to the Academy of the Irish portion of the Ashburnham MSS., Sir Samuel proceeded to London, and in conference with Dr Bond, Principal Librarian of the British Museum, selected the MSS. for transfer, and obtained for the Academy a larger portion of them than would otherwise, most probably, have been given.

At the time of the celebration of the centenary of the Academy (1886), Sir Samuel was prevented by failing health from taking an active part in it, but by frequent letters and otherwise showed undiminished interest in all its proceedings. On that occasion Dr Ingram took his place as senior Vice-President, and gave such an exhaustive *résumé* of the work of the Academy from its commencement as saves me on the present occasion from dwelling upon any part of our past history except that of the last five years, during which our late President directed our meetings and policy with such marked success.

In the Department of Antiquities we have had from our late President the translation of the Patrician Documents into his own graceful and attractive Anglo-Irish, of which he was so complete a master—a translation that must draw and win students of other branches of knowledge, who would otherwise have cared but little for St Patrick and his literary memorials.

I should add to this the valuable Memoir on the Stowe Missal, by the Rev. Dr M'Carthy.

In conclusion, gentlemen, I now ask for your hearty support and assistance, during the period in which it may please God that I shall remain your President.

We close to-day a page of the past, and open another of the future—

"Cras ingens iterabimus æquor."

For many other Academic associates, who were also private friends, Ferguson had a sincere regard. Besides those already dwelt on, space only forbids to enlarge on David R. Pigot, Master in Chancery, son of the courteous and beloved Chief Baron. Drs Aquila Smith, W. Fraser, E. P. Wright, V. Ball; the Rev. Dr MacIvor and Rev. Maxwell Close; Mr R. Longworth-Dames, Messrs Maxwell and Lucius Hutton; Professors Hennessy, Atkinson, and Macalister, and his brother Robert, Secretary to the Academy, and others too numerous to mention, had their places in the friendly, sympathetic, and affectionate heart of Ferguson. That he possessed their esteem and attachment is evidenced in the 'Minutes of Proceedings,' 1887, where the Academic labours of Sir Samuel Ferguson are thus spoken of:—

> The year that has just elapsed is memorable to the Academy, not more for the celebration of its centenary than for the death of our late distinguished President, Sir Samuel Ferguson. In him has passed away one of the oldest members of the Academy, and one of its staunchest friends. He had been a member for upwards of fifty years. From the very beginning of his membership he gave proof of his peculiar turn of mind. The love for antiquarian studies animated him down to the last year of his life, from his first paper, published in January 1838, to his last work "On the Patrician Documents," 1885, a work which gives us the measure alike of the intimacy of his acquaintance with the story of Ireland's Apostle, and of his mastery over the riches and beauty of the English tongue.
>
> During the twenty years between 1841 and 1863, the absorbing duties of his profession of barrister left him but little leisure for the prosecution of antiquarian research;

but as soon as circumstances permitted, his eager mind returned to the cherished studies of his younger days, and in 1863 he began a series of investigations into the arcana of Oghamic writing, which he carried on down to the end of his life with unabated zeal. No failure seemed to daunt him, no praise made him relax his efforts; and it is not too much to say that if ever the interpretation of the Oghamic record be solidly established, a large share in the renown of the discovery will fall of right to Sir Samuel Ferguson.

Nor is it solely to his efforts towards the solution of this problem that his renown is due: the thanks of scholars are not less owed to the devotion with which he hunted out from every corner in Ireland the pillar-stones on which the writings are engraved. It was indeed his wish, as it was our hope, that the Academy should be enabled to publish a Corpus Inscriptionum, in the shape of photographs, taken from the paper casts and moulds made by his hands. But with his death the hope has failed: the first fasciculus alone was completed; the remainder await the time when the Academy shall be fortunate enough to discover among its members one who can worthily fulfil the pious duty of completing the work that Sir Samuel Ferguson began.

These drier studies, the pioneer labours of decipherment and tentative translation, appealed to a comparatively narrow circle. But Sir Samuel Ferguson had a far deeper claim on his countrymen than mere antiquarian zeal could establish. Fifty years ago he began to delight the wider public with the native tales and poems of Ireland. It was well that the tales should be translated, but it was a rare fortune that gave Irishmen the opportunity of hearing them told by such a master of speech. In the reproduction of these old legends want of knowledge and want of sympathy would be alike fatal, and yet the adequate possession of both would not have sufficed to give the nameless charm of many of them. That could only be given by a poet, and Sir Samuel Ferguson was undoubtedly a real poet. Under his hand the charm of the novelty in the story is heightened by the exquisiteness of the form; the two elements are blended into a

product peculiarly Irish, and of singular excellence. His last effort, his version of the Patrician Documents, is a noble ending to his work as a student and as a poet.

But it is not solely as thinker and writer that we have to mourn his loss. The Academy has had no truer son. Outside the range of his private relations, the Academy was second only to Ireland in his sympathies; there was nothing that affected either which did not stir up in him a correspondent emotion. The highest honours that the Academy could confer upon him were his; but perhaps even these honours were less significant than the esteem in which he was universally held. And as he was honoured in his public life, so in private he was equally beloved, for his heart was as large as his intellect was clear.

CHAPTER XXVI.

1867–1886.

HIS WORK AS DEPUTY KEEPER OF THE RECORDS OF IRELAND.

"Old age hath yet his honour and his toil;
Death closes all: but something ere the end,
Some work of noble note, may yet be done.
. . . . . .
Tho' much is taken, much abides; and tho'
We are not now that strength which in old days
Moved earth and heaven; that which we are, we are;
One equal temper of heroic hearts,
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield."

—TENNYSON.

IN the summer of 1867 Edwin, Earl of Dunraven, about to collect material for his noble work, 'Notes on Irish Architecture,' proposed to Ferguson a further sojourn on Aranmore in his company:—

I hope you will be able to come with Dr Stokes and me to Aran in August. I intend to bring over a photographer, and we shall try to do the thing completely. Pray come if you can. I never see anything of you, which is not satisfactory. Will you be free by the 5th or 6th of August? I suppose you will be going Circuit immediately.

A little later he again wrote from Dunraven Castle, South Wales:—

> I don't see why your not being free till the 10th or 12th of August should prevent your coming then, and I hope you will do so. What I should like to do would be to make a thorough exploration of the Aran monuments, and have everything photographed that is worth doing, and then do you take the military part and handle it as you like, and leave me the ecclesiastical. Do try and arrange this.

He was disappointed not to have been one of the group of friends who had visited Aranmore in 1857, and, half in jest, half in earnest, had told the Fergusons that until they should consent to revisit the islands under his auspices he would not forgive them for not having invited him to join that expedition.

Lord Dunraven was himself an accomplished archæologist. As Lord Adare, he has been already named in connection with the Ordnance Survey Memoir; in Astronomical science he had been the pupil of Sir W. R. Hamilton at Dunsink. He was also a student of Shakespeare, and took part in the "Readings" in the houses of his friends when he found himself in Dublin.

At the close of the summer Circuit in 1867, Ferguson and his wife, then the guests of General and Mrs Chesney, awaited the completion of Lord Dunraven's arrangements, prepared to join him at a moment's notice. A letter forwarded to Ferguson while at Packolet changed their plans. It was from Lord Naas, then Chief Secretary for Ireland, afterwards

Earl of Mayo, and conveyed an offer of the post of Keeper of the Records of Ireland:—

IRISH OFFICE,
61 QUEEN STREET, S.W., *August 10th.*

MY DEAR SIR,—I have great pleasure in being able to offer you the office of Deputy Keeper of the Records, created under the bills which have just passed through Parliament. The duties will be onerous but honourable, and I am inclined to think that the occupation will be one suited to your tastes and attainments. I am sure that your acceptance of the office will give satisfaction to the public, and that you will have a good opportunity of affording to the country the advantage of much learning and knowledge which so peculiarly fit you for the office. The salary will, I hope, be fixed at a maximum of £800 a-year, commencing at £600; but in your case I shall propose that you should commence at £700 a-year, in consequence of the extra labour which will be thrown on you in the originating of the department.

I do not propose to make any further appointments without conference with you. I think, therefore, that you had better confer with the Master of the Rolls with as little delay as possible, and having fully made yourself acquainted with his views, come over here towards the close of this week in order that we may together endeavour in conjunction with the Treasury to fix satisfactorily the number and salaries of the future staff of the office.—Faithfully yours, NAAS.

S. FERGUSON, Esq.

Thus summoned to London, Ferguson could not fulfil his engagement to the Earl of Dunraven, who proceeded to Aran with Dr and Miss Stokes and his photographer only. Lord Dunraven wrote towards the close of August to tell of their progress:—

I was delighted to find that all was right about the Record Office, but regret much that you were prevented joining us.

We have done everything here, but owing to the broken weather we have lost two days and a half out of eight. We have photographs of every object of real interest, and high time it is that the forts should have been done, for the havoc among them by the rabbit-hunting in the last few years is dreadful.

We came across in a breeze yesterday, and visited McDara'a Island: it blew too fresh for the photographs, but we made camera-tracings of the very remarkable church there.

Among Ferguson's congratulators on his appointment to the Record Office were Dean Reeves, the Rev. E. L. Barnwell, Sir Bernard Burke, Mr Justice Lawson, Isaac Butt, Q.C., and his old companion on the North-East Circuit, Henry Joy, Q.C.

This instant I have read in the 'Express' that you are Deputy Keeper of the Records [wrote the Dean of Armagh]. I have read it with the extreme of pleasure, and before the post leaves this village I congratulate you on the appointment, and Mother Erin on her present luck, wishing to both son and mother all the felicitations of such a happy domestic arrangement. You cease to be Crown Prosecutor of Armagh, but your call leads to a higher Bar, to be Crown Prosecutor of the long-neglected and despised studies of Record literature, the materials for which were created by the Law, and the development of which will, I trust, bring lustre to the creator through the talents, taste, and patriotism of the rightfully selected member of the family.—Believe me to remain your affectionate friend, WM. REEVES.

I congratulate the Record Office on the acquisition of such a Deputy Keeper [wrote Mr Barnwell], and I only hope the Office itself is one worth your acceptance.

I have read with infinite pleasure of your appointment to the chief direction of the new Record Department [wrote Sir Bernard Burke]. Your legal attainments, your enlarged mind, your literary ability, are qualifications few others possess.

My dear Ferguson [wrote Mr Justice Lawson],—I congratulate you, and especially the country which has obtained the services of one so eminently qualified for the post. The appointment reflects the greatest credit upon the Government. You were one of the men at our profession whom *upon the merits* I desired to see promoted.

Isaac Butt, Q.C., sent his congratulations:—

I need not tell you [he said] with what satisfaction I saw that you are to have the care and custody of the Records. I rejoice in this on national grounds, independent of the pleasure I would feel in anything that would be for your interest, as I hope this is.

Henry Joy, Q.C., wrote to the same effect:—

It gives me such hearty pleasure to see in this day's paper your appointment to the Record Office—a very important post—that I cannot allow a post to pass without congratulating an old and valued friend. I ought perhaps rather to congratulate the public upon an appointment (rare in this country) which provides a right man in the right place.

Although Ferguson made a considerable sacrifice of income by retiring from the Bar, he was not unwilling to accept the post thus offered. His profession had many prizes, but it entailed great anxieties. An assured income, even though a smaller one, had its compensations. His tastes, and those of his wife, were simple, and he had ever been "an undervaluer of money." His health had more than once given way under the strain of professional work, with its late hours and weighty responsibilities. He replied to Lord Naas's letter accepting the task of organising the newly created Record Office, and went at once to London, as suggested by the Chief Secretary.

That Ferguson was conscious that he possessed practical ability and power of organising is evident from his own words:—

In 1867 I gave up the profession of the Law and entered on the duties of my present office of Deputy Keeper of the Public Records in Ireland. Besides my training at the Bar and the knowledge of palæography acquired in my earlier researches, I have naturally a strong turn for the practical applications of knowledge, and believe that my character presents at least as much of the man of business on the one side as of the poet or man of letters on the other. In the exercise of this faculty for business I had amongst my earliest contributions to the 'University' communicated those papers on the "Commercial Capabilities of Ireland" which were the precursors of the ampler and more scientific "Industrial Resources" of Sir Robert Kane. At the Bar I had been much engaged in a class of cases requiring a knowledge of practical handicraft, and in my new office I have found full occupation both for my Record and Legal knowledge, and for my constructive faculty. To make the most of light and space, to combine individual accessibility with general closeness of deposit, and to devise the various details of mechanical adjustment as well as of methodical arrangement, was just the kind of task for which my life and habits of mind had prepared me. Nine [1877; now eighteen] Reports show what has been done during as many years, in assembling the Records of the country from their scattered repositories and placing them in one custody under one uniform system of arrangement and reference.

How this work has been accomplished is told in the following pages, kindly furnished by Dr J. J. Digges La Touche, who was Assistant Deputy Keeper during Sir Samuel's lifetime, and is now his successor:—

The Public Records of Ireland being in the keeping of several persons, and many of them in unfit buildings, it was

deemed expedient to establish one office and a better custody, and to allow the free use of the records as far as might be consistent with their safety and with the public policy of the realm; and a large and commodious building having been erected at the western extremity of the enclosed place at the rear of the Four Courts, Dublin, for the purpose of serving as a Public Record Office, the Public Records (Ireland) Act, 1867, was passed and received the Royal Assent on the 12th August 1867.

Under this Act the Lord Lieutenant was empowered, with the consent of the Treasury, to appoint a fit person, duly qualified by his knowledge of records, to be Deputy Keeper of the Records, to act as Chief Record Keeper under the Master of the Rolls, and to superintend all persons employed in the Public Record Office.

Lord Naas, afterwards Lord Mayo, who took the greatest interest in the new department, selected Dr Ferguson to fill this post, and he was appointed by the Marquess of Abercorn, the then Lord Lieutenant, on the 23d September 1867, and the keys of the new building were delivered up to him by the Commissioners of Public Works in Ireland on the 19th November in that same year.

Dr Ferguson's literary tastes, his well-known interest in Irish antiquities and history, and his special familiarity with early English law, seemed to mark him out as eminently suited for the position of Director of the new depository of the Records. The task, however, which actually lay before him proved to be of a character which would have been very uncongenial to most men of letters.

The similar Department established in London by statute in the early years of her Majesty's reign was, in fact, a reorganisation of the old Record Commission which had been in existence from the beginning of the century; so that whilst a change took place in the form of the record work and publication, the control of the Records in England remained unbroken in the same experienced hands.

With the Irish Records the state of things was very different. The Irish Record Commission had been dissolved in 1830,

and with it had passed away all central control of the Irish Records. These now lay scattered through some two dozen offices, often in the hands of persons quite incapable of understanding, and still more often of those wholly careless of, their value.

It was the immediate duty of the new Department to trace and collect the Records from their numerous hiding-places. The Records which were by the new Act primarily to be brought together in the new repository were, as above stated, scattered through some twenty-five offices. Dr Ferguson found himself obliged to initiate every step of the necessary proceedings. The legal form of sanction, the mode of dealing with the officials having charge of records, some of whom were unwilling to part with the documents, and others so anxious to be quit of their charge as to chafe at any delay; the organisation of the new officials; the arranging, cataloguing, and indexing of the incoming Records; and even the mechanical arrangements for their carriage and stowage in the new building, had all to be arranged for. Dr Ferguson's versatile nature was strikingly illustrated in the active interest he displayed in the most minute provisions, in the details of construction, the adjustment of shelving, the parcelling of Records so as to make them most suitable for deposit. Indeed a dozen appliances, many displaying marked inventive talent, were the outcome of his own mechanical genius.

The first piece of work which was thrown upon the Office was a rather discouraging one. Before the staff was yet completed, a fire broke out in the offices of one of the Chancery Masters, and the documents they contained — hundreds of thousands of papers and parchments, many injured by fire or water, and most of them in utter disorder—were hurried into the new Record building. The orderly arrangement of this heterogeneous collection demanded immediate attention; but, nothing daunted, the new Deputy Keeper, with such help as was available, undertook the work, and in a short time reduced the chaotic mass to order.

The transfer of the great collection of the Rolls Office; the Landed Estates Record Office and Vice-Treasurer's Records

in the Custom-House; the Bermingham Tower Rolls, the Parliamentary Records, and the Record Commissioners' Collection from Dublin Castle; the three Common Law Courts, and the Equity and Revenue Exchequer, soon followed. In three years from the foundation of the Office, the removal of the numerous Records from these large repositories had been effected, they had been made accessible, and in part rearranged in the Record Office. The vast bulk of these documents may be imagined from the fact that those from the Custom-House alone were estimated to weigh 169 tons.

Following the removal of those great classes of Records were the transfers of a long series of smaller collections, most important of which were the Probate Registries. These especially entailed much negotiation. In 1875 a new branch of work was thrown upon the Deputy Keeper, in which he took a special interest. On the Disestablishment of the Irish Church in 1870, whilst the Records relating to the property and revenues of the Church had been attended to, by being placed under the care of the Church Temporalities Commission, no provision had been made for the custody of the Parish Records. In 1875 an Act was passed to remedy this omission and provide that the Registers of Births, Deaths, and Marriages belonging to parishes should, as the old incumbents passed from office, be deposited in the Public Record Office. The widely scattered localities of these Records, and the more or less open hostility of not a few of the clergy, smarting under a sense of injustice from recent legislative action, made the execution of this Act a work demanding much patience, skill, and tact. The difficulties it entailed were further increased by the passing of a hastily drawn Amendment Act in the following year, framed in the interest of a few influential clergy who were opposed to the transfer of their Registers, by which the Master of the Rolls was empowered, under certain conditions, to permit Records to be retained in such parishes as were properly provided with means for their safe deposit and custody. So many were the difficulties surrounding the collection of these important Records, that Dr Ferguson felt it necessary himself

to undertake a large part of the delicate duty of dealing with their ecclesiastical custodians. In prosecution of this service he had, at great inconvenience and often at much personal discomfort, to travel through many remote parts of the country, explaining where necessary to the clergy the requirements of the Acts, and thus to secure their compliance.

The large amount of routine drudgery which these continual transfers, with the necessary accompaniment of cataloguing, entailed on the Department, was to some small extent relieved by the duty of preparing the annual reports, which, in accordance with the Public Records Act, the Deputy Keeper was called upon to make for presentation to Parliament. Eighteen of these reports by Dr Ferguson were published, for the years 1868 to 1885. Though not perhaps attractive to the casual reader, these reports possess a great fund of interest for students of Irish history and legal institutions, and exemplify the careful accuracy and minute elaboration which characterise Sir Samuel's antiquarian writings.

In undertaking the duties of Deputy Keeper, it was Dr Ferguson's most ardent desire to continue the work of Record publication which had been begun so many years before by the Irish Record Commissioners. The publication of the early Irish Statutes, the Chancery and Exchequer Inquisitions for Munster and Connaught, the Exchequer Inquisitions for Ulster and Leinster, the early Plea Rolls, the Memoranda Rolls of the Exchequer, the Patent Rolls from the reign of James I., and other historically interesting though smaller classes of Records, was a consummation very dear to him, and would, if achieved, or even partly achieved, have been a suitable crown to the work of one distinguished as a lawyer and an antiquary, as well as to the Head of a Record Office.

Much material for these works had been left by the Record Commissioners, but the large amount of routine work entailed by the reception, arrangement, and indexing of so many collections of documents, and the subsequent reduction by the Treasury of the staff at his disposal, rendered his cherished hopes in this direction unattainable. But though thus dis-

appointed in the literary results of his work, the years during which he presided over the Record Office showed great strides in making the Records of this country accessible to future students. The organisation of an efficient Department, the tracing, assembling, arranging, and making available as they never had been before so large a mass of documents, was much to accomplish in but the later years of an always busy and eventful life.

If he left behind him in connection with his Office not much literary or historical results, it was not from want either of zeal, assiduity, or ability, but from causes entirely beyond his own control; and he has to show for his official labours a Department started out of chaos, which in its arrangement, organisation, and facility of reference by the literary and legal public, has more than amply fulfilled the expectations previously held out concerning it.

It will be seen from Dr La Touche's statement how much tact was necessary for dealing with the clergy of the disestablished Church of Ireland, whose parish registers were by law to be taken from them and transferred to the Record Office. It was resented by most of them as a grievance as well as a pecuniary loss. It is apparent from the following letter from Dean Reeves that Ferguson had consulted him. The future Bishop had a keen sense of humour, and his account of the way in which many of the registries were kept shows how necessary was the Act which transferred them to a public office:—

THE LIBRARY, ARMAGH, *January* 23, 1874.

Your letter of yesterday puts to me an exceedingly difficult question to answer, so unequal are the populations of parishes, and so painfully defective the record qualifications of the clerical exponents a generation or two past. When I was curate of Lisburn (an intensely English and orderly settle-

ment) I had to do with Registers copious and regular, dating, with a well-maintained succession, from the commencement of the seventeenth century, wherein I found entries of the deaths of members of Jeremy Taylor's family, and abundant notices of Schomberg's troops. But when I went from that parish to Ballymena, to my horror the parochial registry started with the year of my own birth (1815) and not a scrap anterior!

In Lusk I found some vestiges of earlier days, but in the main a serial not much earlier than this century. The truth is, that in Ballymena among Presbyterians, and in Lusk among Papists, the recurrences of baptisms, marriages, and burials were so few and far between that the Episcopalian or the Protestant incumbent had not sufficient stimulus to institute a registry, and the intervals in the execution of his offices in these occasional duties were so long that his note-book, if such he had, was put past and hardly to be found. Again, incumbents kept the books, if such existed, in their homes, and for convenience put them in the shelves of their little libraries, if not on the tops of some old press; and in the one case the registry books were numbered with his assets when he died, and, when his books were prepared for sale, either disposed of as waste paper or turned over to the waste-paper-basket. Those on top of the press were sure to be utilised on occasions of economic dearth in combustibles by the housemaid in the promotion of family caloric. I remember being shown by a gentleman in the county of Down, noble-minded and intelligent, vestry books of the parish whereof his father had been incumbent, which had come to him as part of his father's library, and were treasured up by him as choice ingredients in his private collection of family muniments. At Tynan I have a parochial registry of births, deaths, and marriages commencing, *horribile dictu*, at 1808—and this in a model parish, where the Established Church element has always been in the ascendant! My squire solves the enigma by saying that there was a curate who was an inveterate piscator, and that he employed the registral leaves of parchment from time to time as fly-books, until all the

volume became fly-leaves. I cannot certify to the birth, death, or marriage of any one in Tynan parish between 1720 and 1808! This is very sad.

Viewing matters of this kind, then, with the eye of a layman and an archivist, I feel disgusted with the conduct of my predecessors, or of the whole *régime* which permitted such frightful abuses, and I can feel some sympathy in the Scotch measures which swept all such records, down to a recent date, into the General Register House, and left the parochial ministers to their sacred functions, but divested them of the office of deputy keepers of records.

On the other hand, as a cleric my choler rises at the idea of a forcible abstraction from my custody of books which I have contributed to create, and carefully laboured to preserve. And in my case the feeling is intensified by habits of strict custody and non-intrusion which I have acquired.

Dreading the meditated swoop of your Office, which I most cordially honour and esteem, I have had thoughts of falling to work at once and transcribing *propria manu* all my *registra* in a uniform manner and to my own taste, ere they be snatched (*quod absit*) from me. It comes to this,—I have pity for myself should I be deprived of my parochial muniments, but I have no sympathy with my brethren who do not care a fig for these things. I was born a Registrar and scrivener, and therefore I am not an impartial opinion in these matters.

Now as to parochial Registers, they embrace three departments—Births, Marriages, and Burials. In the parchment books which were issued under the old Board of First-Fruits, and after it by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, the volume had three divisions under the above heads. In the baptisms, 8 on a page, I always considered the spaces too large, and I have been in the habit of bisecting them and putting 16 on a page. Again, the formulæ vary. Some record only the Christian name of the child, the names of the father, and the Christian name of the mother. My plan to help identification has always been to give both names of the father and the maiden name of the mother, as also the date of the child's

birth as well as baptism, though the former is really only presumptive evidence. The parson can swear to the baptism, but not to the age further than as alleged. Beyond my four parishes of actual experience (I began Curate, then Perpetual Curate, then Vicar, then Rector), I have no acquaintance with parochial records further than to know that in nine cases out of ten they are not older than the present century. But how to estimate their extent for this period, in the three departments, I know not. In my present tone of mind I should be disposed to oppose the centralisation of parochial records, for the clergy are now better keepers than they used to be; but I would be disposed to give every help in the creation of authentic transcripts to be made in your office from our originals *on loan*. If I were Primate or a Bishop, I would feel it incumbent on me to rehabilitate my Registry Office of the diocese, and there I would bestow all my goods.

Archbishop M'Gettigan most kindly lent me the three volumes of Curry's Lectures. The introductory volume struck me as very able, just what I would expect from Sullivan. It is very suggestive and valuable, and to my mind worth the two actual volumes ten times over. There is an air of self-satisfied composure in the prelections which disturbs me, and the *ipse dixits* are not sufficiently backed with scholarship to satisfy me.

I intend to go to Dublin on Monday in attendance on my lord and master to do devoirs at the foot of the Viceregal throne on Tuesday. But I hope on Monday night to sit at the feet of the President or Chairman of the R. I. A.—Yours affectionately, WM. REEVES.

The gentleness combined with firmness, the inborn courtesy and consideration which were characteristic of Ferguson, and his unswerving allegiance to duty, fitted him, even more than his intellectual equipment, to watch over, guide, and influence those over whom he had to preside. Gentlemen, young and inexperienced, though they had passed first-class Civil Service

examinations, artisans, and workmen in various departments, had been trained by him and fitted to carry out with zeal and efficiency the requirements of their several departments. He took the sincerest interest in them all, and enforced his precepts by example. So resolute was he that when, in impaired health, his physicians desired that he should take wine with his mid-day meal, he refused to obey. A small flask for the waistcoat-pocket, which held one glass of sherry, had been got for him, but he positively refused to make use of it. "I allow no stimulants to be brought into the Record Office," he said, "and none shall be taken there by me."

How he won and retained the confidence, esteem, and affection of his staff will be evident from the following letters. A few only are given. The first illustrates how in the breast of the Deputy Keeper mercy seasoned justice:—

I am obliged to part with —— ——, the writer whose work in map-copying I showed you. He has been allowed to ask for his discharge in consequence of a piece of misconduct which cannot be overlooked in a public office, but which would not be likely to occur in a private employment where his work would be measured by daily inspection. He has served here for six years, and has produced much creditable work. If you can do anything to put him in the way of employment I would be obliged.

The next letter refers to a case of infectious illness in the household of one of his staff:—

I am sincerely concerned to know how unhappy you must be. Your chief effort—for you can do nothing in Mrs ——'s

case but wait the result—must be to keep the rest of your household and yourself out of the way of infection, and your physician will be best able to tell you how that is to be done. It may strain your money resources. If so, let me know, and I'll be ready to lend a hand.

My dear Berry [wrote Ferguson to one of his staff about to leave the Record Office for a better appointment elsewhere], —I cannot let you leave this office without a word of farewell. You carry with you the goodwill of every one in the house, and my own thanks for services assiduously and faithfully performed. The Parochial Records Register will long be a memorial of your business-like industry. I find it hard to say whether I am more sorry to lose you or glad that you go in the way of advancement and bettered fortunes.—Believe me, with every good and kind wish, yours, my dear Berry, very sincerely, Saml. Ferguson.

To this Mr Berry replied:—

I hasten to thank you sincerely for your letter, and beg to assure you of my deep appreciation of the kindly feeling that prompted your writing it. To have had conveyed in your own graceful way so warm an expression of goodwill and regret on your own part and on that of my late colleagues has been, indeed, most grateful to me. It was with great regret I left the office, and believe me that my connection with it will always be a source of pride to me, especially in having had the happiness of serving so long under so distinguished a Chief. I hope to have the pleasure of personally thanking you at an early day, and may I take this opportunity of expressing to Mrs Ferguson my warm thanks for much kindness and attention, and of congratulating her on the new honour she is so soon to share with you?

All the staff of the Record Office, including the workmen, attended in St Patrick's Cathedral, on the 12th of August 1886, the obsequies of the Chief whom

they revered. Many of them expressed their affection and respect in letters to Lady Ferguson on her bereavement. A few are here cited :—

Dear Lady Ferguson,—Your very kind expressions and thoughtfulness in sending a remembrance of Sir Samuel so perfect in every sense touched me very much. I possess two excellent likenesses of him and a couple of autograph letters, which, with the card, shall be cherished in dear and lasting memory of one for whom I entertained the sincerest regard, and who ever treated me (as indeed he did all in whom he felt an interest) with the utmost kindness and consideration.

Mr Overend told me a good deal of his last days, and whenever he talked he seemed much affected. Sir Samuel's perfect peace and resignation impressed him greatly, and I know he highly valued the privilege of seeing so much of him at the end, and now greatly prizes the recollection of Sir Samuel's affectionate regard. I need hardly tell you how deeply impressed we all were by the solemn service in the Cathedral and by the Archbishop's beautiful address: it set out so perfectly the true nobility and simplicity of character of him we all mourned. Tickell's lines on Addison kept constantly recurring—

> "He taught us how to live, and oh! too high
> The price of knowledge taught us how to die."

At the time of your great loss I did not like to trouble you with any line of sympathy, full well knowing you would have it in abundance, and that you would feel how truly every one privileged with Sir Samuel's friendship was your fellow-mourner; but in thanking you again much, I am glad to have the opportunity of expressing my heartfelt sympathy with her whose loss has been so great.—Ever, dear Lady Ferguson, truly yours, H. F. Berry.

My dear Lady Ferguson,—Although not altogether unexpected, I cannot tell you how much grieved I was to hear to-day of the death of dear Sir Samuel. How much I mourn

for him, and how much I shall miss him, few will be able to tell. He was ever a kind, considerate, and true friend to me. I can never forget him,—his genial courtesy, his ever willingness to overlook shortcomings, and his generosity in reproof. I dare not hope to get a Chief like him again. The last two or three times that I had the privilege of seeing him I was much struck—that with all his physical weakness—at the clearness and tranquillity of his mind, with the same cheerful disposition. I will not further intrude upon your great sorrow, but remain as ever faithfully yours,

JOHN OVEREND.

P.S.—I can truly say that there are none of us who do not miss him and mourn for him, for his greatness possessed the greatness of a kind, a loving heart.

DEAR LADY FERGUSON,—I hardly know how to thank you sufficiently for sending me the memorial card of my honoured and regretted Chief. I think the likeness is a wonderfully true and good one. For your kind and consoling words regarding my own illness I feel most deeply grateful. I did not like to intrude on your sorrow by writing sooner to express my sympathy at your great loss, but it was and is none the less true and heartfelt. Again thanking you for your kindness, I remain, dear Lady Ferguson, with the greatest respect, very sincerely yours, THOS. M'GHEE.

DUBLIN RECORD OFFICE,
DUBLIN, *6th Oct.* 1886.

DEAR LADY FERGUSON,—I am very grateful for your kind and unexpected recollection of me, and for the honour you do me in thus including me among the friends of my lost Chief. I had already possessed a photograph of Sir Samuel, but I shall keep this among my most prized relics, and can never look at it without a revival of the affectionate regard I have for so many years felt for him. It would be presumptuous for me to express sympathy with you in your great trial; but I do feel how deep a blank must be left

in the home by the removal of one so kind, so thoughtful, and so broad in his sympathies as Sir Samuel has always proved to me.—Very faithfully yours, JAMES MILLS.

The words of the Elizabethan poet recur to the mind in reading such testimonies as these:—

"All heads must come
To the cold tomb;
Only the actions of the just
Smell sweet and blossom in the dust."

CHAPTER XXVII.

1810–1886.

HIS ATTITUDE TOWARDS QUESTIONS OF BELIEF.

"Rather I prize the doubt
Low kinds exist without,
Finished and finite clods, untroubled by a spark."

—BROWNING.

"When leaves are green, or golden-sere—
O bright and unforgotten love—
Once in the circuit of the year,
I bend thy lonely grave above.

There, where steep soars the virgin hill,
And the blue [inland] waters roll,
I go to muse, and to fulfil
A tender yearning of the soul:

To muse on days that far away
In Time's grey ocean, like an isle
Touched with the pearly bloom of May
And lit with morning, shine and smile:

To marvel when, to wonder where
These searching eyes shall find thee next,
Find thee, still gracious, firm, and fair,
With sorrow's mystery unvext.

Faith's noblest instinct is not blind,
Hope's lark-like music empty speech;
I shall find thee, we lose to find,
By the dark vale the mountains reach."

—JOSEPH TRUMAN.

IN dealing with the many movements of a many-sided mind, especially in the most individual and

sacred of all relations—its spiritual emotions—it is safest to use only the language in which these convictions have personally been expressed, and dwell mainly on the evidences of sincerity afforded by the conduct and the life.

Ferguson's mind was not uniformly orthodox. He thought for himself. He had difficulties; and long felt a repugnance to the doctrine of original sin. He too—as Tennyson has described his friend—was one

> "In many a subtle question versed,
> Who touch'd a jarring lyre at first,
> But ever strove to make it true:
>
> Perplext in faith, but pure in deeds,
> At last he beat his music out.
> There lives more faith in honest doubt,
> Believe me, than in half the creeds.
>
> He fought his doubts and gather'd strength,
> He would not make his judgment blind,
> He faced the spectres of the mind
> And laid them: thus he came at length
>
> To find a stronger faith his own."

The story of the man of Uz, "perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil," may be taken as expressive of the questionings of other minds, conscious, like Job, of rectitude, "I will maintain mine own ways before Him." This attitude—not unusual in human experience—has found expression in Ferguson's poem "Two Voices," a dialogue between Conscience and the Intellectual Soul:—

TWO VOICES.

Two voices in my breast
Heard I debate, ere slumber o'er me stole:
Conscience was one; and urgent she addressed
The Intellectual Soul.

CONSCIENCE.

Soul, if the day were come
When thou must part the body's company,
What recompense, thinkest thou, of final doom
Hath the just God for thee?

. . . . . .

Evade not, Soul; but give
Answer direct: bethink thyself and say
What doom is that thou lookest to receive
At the accounting day?

. . . . . .

SOUL.

For me to judge, and say
What God in justice should adjudge of me,
Makes me the judge of God. I put away
That fond impiety.

CONSCIENCE.

Prevaricating sprite,
Thou shalt no more in feats evasive glory;
No more with crafty doublings turn and slight
The interrogatory
What *feel'st* thou?

SOUL.

There indeed
Pinches the point I can no more refuse:
I feel—I feel—whatever be decreed,
I much shall need excuse.

This was Job's experience when brought into direct relations with his Maker: "I will lay mine hand upon my mouth. . . . I have uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not. . . . I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth Thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." This may illustrate Ferguson's experience also. The poem already quoted, his "Three Thoughts," "Three Seasons," and "The Morning's Hinges," about to be cited, indicate the mental struggle and the final victory:—

THREE THOUGHTS.

I.

"Come in, Sweet Thought, come in;
Why linger at the door?
Is it because a shape of sin
Defiled the place before?
'Twas but a moment there;
I chased it soon away;
Behold, my breast is clean and bare—
Come in, Sweet Thought, and stay."
The Sweet Thought said me, "No,
I love not such a room;
Where uncouth inmates come and go,
And back unbidden, come.
I rather make my cell
From ill resort secure,
Where love and lovely fancies dwell
In bosoms virgin-pure."

II.

"Oh, Pure Thought," then I said,
"Come thou, and bring with thee
This dainty Sweetness, fancy-bred,
That flouts my house and me.

No peevish pride hast thou,
Nor turnest glance of scorn
On aught the laws of life allow
In man of woman born."
Said he, "No place for us
Is here: and, be it known,
You dwell where ways are perilous
For them that walk alone.
There needs the surer road,
The fresher-sprinkl'd floor,
Else are we not for your abode;"
And turned him from my door.

III.

Then, in my utmost need,
"Oh, Holy Thought," I cried,
"Come thou, that cleansest will and deed,
And in my breast abide."
"Yea, sinner, that will I,
And presently begin;"
And ere the heart had heaved its sigh,
The Guest Divine came in.
As in the pest-house ward
The prompt Physician stands,
As in the leaguered castle-yard
The Warden with his bands,
He stood, and said, "My task
Is here, and here my home;
And here am I who only ask
That I be asked to come."

IV.

See how in huddling flight
The ranks of darkness run,
Exhale and perish in the light
Streamed from the risen sun;

How, but a drop infuse
Within the turbid bowl,
Of some elixir's virtuous juice,
It straight makes clear the whole;
So from before his face
The fainting phantoms went,
And in a fresh and sunny place
My soul sat down content;
For—mark and understand
My ailment and my cure—
Love came and brought me in his hand
The Sweet Thought and the Pure.

THREE SEASONS.

I.

My breast was as a briary brake
I lacked the rake and shears to trim;
Or like a deep, weed-tangled lake,
Where man can neither wade nor swim:
So full of various discontent
At things I had not height to scan,
Nor breadth nor depth to comprehend,
It seemed as though creation's end
Were but enigma, and God's plan
One knotted hard entanglement.

II.

Oh! glad the morning light we greet,
That shows the pathway newly found;
And grateful to the oaring feet
The touch, at last, of solid ground.
A breath: beheld in clearer air,
The path surmounts the mountain-side;
A touch: the knots asunder fall;
And from the smooth uncoiling ball,
With easy play the shuttle glides
To weave the robe the righteous wear.

III.

Ah me! for such a robe unfit,
How shall I let my face be shown,
Or venture at the feet to sit
Of them that sit around the throne?
He who upon the darkened eyes
Has breathed, and touched the chords within,
Will order all aright. Till then,
Here let me, in the ways of men
Walk meekly, and essay to win
The righteous joy this life supplies.

The later stanzas of "The Morning's Hinges" run thus:—

O most Mighty, O most High,
Past Thought's compass, what am I
That should dare Thy comprehending
In this narrow, shallow brain?
Yea, but Thou hast given a Soul
Well capacious of the whole,
And a Conscience ever tending
Rightward surely not in vain.

. . . . .

No, a something cries within;
No; I am not of your kin,
Broods of evil! all the forces
Of my nature answer No!
Though the world be overspread
With the riddle still unread
Of your being, of your sources,
This with sense supreme I know;

That behoves me, and I can,
Work within the inner man
Such a weeding, such a cleansing
Of this moss-grown home-plot here,

As shall make its herbage meet
For the soles of angels' feet,
And its blooms for eyes dispensing
Light of Heaven's own atmosphere.

"Yea, what thou hast last advanced,
Creature, verily thou canst."
(Hark the Master!) "Up. Bestir thee;
And, that thou mayst find the way,
Things inscrutable laid by,
Be content to know that I,
Hoping, longing, waiting for thee,
Stand beside thee, every day."

Lord, and is it Thou, indeed,
Takest pity on my need,
Who nor symbol show nor token
Vouching aught of right in me?
"I, dear Soul," the Master said,
"Come to some through broken bread;
Come to some through message spoken;
Come in pure, free grace to thee."

So, as Browning expresses it in words put into David's mouth in the poet's "Saul":—

"All's love, yet all's law. . . .
A Man like to me,
Thou shalt love and be loved by, for ever: a Hand like this hand
Shall throw open the gates of new life to thee! See the Christ stand!"

Still more finely does Browning assert this doctrine in the postscript to his "Epistle of Karshish, an Arab Physician," in what is probably the highest utterance to which he has attained as poet and teacher:—

"The very God! think, Abib; dost thou think?
So, the All-Great, were the All-Loving too—
So, through the thunder comes a human voice
Saying, 'O heart I made, a heart beats here!
Face, my hands fashioned, see it in myself!
Thou hast no power nor mayst conceive of mine:
But love I gave thee, with myself to love,
And thou must love me who have died for thee!'
The madman saith He said so: it is strange."

In his "Hymn of the Fishermen," a poem written after a surmounted danger, Ferguson dwelt on the Divine mercy in the salvation of erring creatures. He, in company with his wife and a young lady friend, had crossed Roundstone Bay on a lovely and calm day of summer when the Atlantic, waveless and blue as the sky above them, seemed the gentlest of all gentle things. Songs were sung as the boat glided smoothly over the water, not alone by the ladies, but by the sailors who navigated her. The man who held the rudder had a melodious voice, and rendered with feeling the beautiful Irish melody, "Molly Bawn Asthore." It was rapturously encored and repeated. Before its close the music suddenly ceased, and the steersman became pale with fear. The sail was instantly lowered, and we were called on to refrain from the slightest movement. The boat had drifted over a reef, and but a few inches of water were between her canvas bottom and the jagged rocks. We were face to face with death. Fortunately there was little wind, and the oars were gently used to push us off the dangerous reef. When again in safety we with one accord

returned thanks to God for our preservation, but we sang no more that day.

The concluding verses of Ferguson's "Hymn of the Fishermen" allude to the incident and its spiritual significance:—

Who, when through drift and darkness
The reeling hooker flies,
And rocks, in ridgy starkness,
Athwart our bows arise,
Prompt to the helm's commanding,
Brings round the swerving tree,
Till, into harbour standing,
We anchor safe and free.

And, great and small sufficing,
Before that equal law,
That rules the sun's uprising,
And makes the mainsail draw,
Brings round His erring creatures
To seek salvation's ways,
By laws surpassing Nature's—
To God give foremost praise.

On another occasion Ferguson having to drive, in storm and rain broken by fitful gleams of sunshine, over a wild mountain-road, encountered a little girl bravely facing the elements on that "tempestuous autumn day o'er the windy moors," and surmised of her:—

Something thou hast had to do,
Deemed of trust and moment too.

Now, the errand duly done,
Home thou hiest fast,
Through the flying gleams of sun,
Through the laden blast,

With the light of purpose high
Kindling bravely in thine eye.

. . . . .

Round thee, in the glittering rays
  By the rain-drops shed,
Shone the blossom'd furze a-blaze,
  Shone the fern-brake red;
Rough but lovely, as thy own
Life's ideal, little one!

Then a glowing thought there came,
  Guess I not aright?—
That the furze's yellow flame
  Could not shine so bright,
Nor the fern-leaves spread so fair,
If the good God were not there.

Rightly to that thought I trace
  All the courage high
Flushing through thy wetted face,
  Mounting in thine eye,
Now the cloud and driving rain
Close around thy path again.

Could these purblind eyes of mine,
  Past the curtain, see
Things unseen and things divine,
  Sure it seems to me
I would see an Angel glide
Down the mountain by thy side.

In the Archbishop of Dublin's address on the 12th of August 1886, in St Patrick's Cathedral, given in the first chapter of this biography, his Grace quoted some stanzas from Ferguson's lines on "Westminster Abbey. On hearing week-day service there, September 1856,"

which need not be repeated here; nor those from "Bird and Brook," in which the poet tells how his

> Soul would strive to raise,
> If it might, a song of praise,

yet felt that

> Silence is the speech of awe.

This reticence was characteristic of Ferguson. He was not effusive in the expression of his deepest feelings. And yet, from his earliest to his latest work, a word here and there shows the under-current of his mind.

> Quiet age, and grassy churchyard grave,

were in his thoughts when he produced in early youth his "Forging of the Anchor," and when he told how Willy Gilliland,

> His hand upon the Book, his knee upon the sod,
> Filled the lonely valley with the gladsome Word of God.

In other poems he speaks of the "leavening Word of Jesus," that "Just One crucified for all men's pardoning"; His "one shedding of blood for the sins of mankind," and the "ties of Christ's brotherhood."

> Discourse of birth, and life, and death,
> And of the resurrection.

In "Mesgedra," a story of pagan times, he

> Tells of woman-love and warrior-ruth,
> And old expectancy of Christ to come,

and sees with "fearless vision"

> One great, good God behind and over all.

"Mesgedra" has been criticised by Mr T. W. Lyster, a writer of delicate discrimination and refined taste, who observes of Sir Samuel Ferguson that "in nearly all the poems based on Irish heroic myth he is attracted by some moral, or religious, or humane idea, either inherent in the myth or read into it in his imaginative scrutiny. This is one of the notes of distinction in his poetry—poetry revealing in all its traits a nature of high distinction."

And yet the genius of Ferguson was essentially masculine. Though a lover of peace, he could appeal to the "God of freedom." In "The Widow's Cloak," a poem of homage to Victoria, "Queen of the Three-joined Realm," whose "sheltering mantle is over India spread," he warns all "who dare to touch the garment's hem" that "the fires are banked: in road and port the seaman-heart swells large"; yet utters the prayer—

Maker, Preserver of mankind, and Saviour that Thou art,
Assuage the rage of wrathful men; bring down their haughty heart;
Or, if not so Thy holy will—suppress the idle sigh,
And God Sabaoth be the name
We know Thee by!

Ferguson's last and lingering illness was borne without a murmur. Entire resignation to the Divine Will, gentleness and consideration for those about him, were conspicuous to the end. So greatly was he esteemed that even comparative strangers were concerned for him.

I have only had the pleasure of seeing him twice [wrote a clergyman], yet I was greatly attracted towards him. I can

quite believe that he is patient, and resigned to leave himself in God's hands.

I cannot refrain from expressing my sympathy with you in your anxious watch [wrote another to Lady Ferguson]. The affection universally felt for so kind and courteous a friend must be even more pleasant for you to remember now than the respect for his gifts and learning and all the stores of valuable knowledge he has acquired by his long and patient research.

The feeling expressed for him by his relatives may be summed up in a sentence from the pen of one among them: "What we feel you know without my saying, since you beyond all else know what he is, and how we all love him."

One of these letters has a peculiar interest, for the lady who wrote it—noble in character, of great charm and goodness—herself died at the same time as Sir Samuel Ferguson. A letter from her husband, Mr Talbot-Crosbie, to Lady Ferguson, with the sad and unexpected intelligence of his wife's decease, crossed hers to tell of her bereavement. Mrs Talbot-Crosbie's note was written in the early stage of Ferguson's illness:—

ARDFERT ABBEY, *January* 25, 1886.

DEAREST LADY FERGUSON,—I don't like to intrude upon you, and yet I like to tell you how much your dear husband and yourself are in my thoughts and prayers. I can't but hope he is improving, and that your great and terrible anxiety is less than it was. Another post-card would be a great boon if you can possibly send it: your last was full of comfort spiritually, although anxious physically. What a true word we have in Job, "When He giveth quietness, who then can make trouble?" That word, taken with our Lord's own word, "Let not your heart be troubled," are enough for all circumstances that may

meet us here, and I love to hope that they are sustaining you in your anxiety, as your beloved one in his weakness. Now I won't detain you longer, and, with much love to you both, ever am yours most affectionately, MARY J. TALBOT-CROSBIE.

Miss Jane Lee, daughter of the late Archdeacon of Dublin, who won for herself the honourable position of Head of a House at Newnham, and, after a distinguished and useful career, departed this life towards the close of 1895, sent the following kind letter to Ferguson's widow :—

I have been wishing for some time past to write to you to say how deeply and truly I feel for you and sympathise with you, and have only not done so sooner because I shrank from intruding upon your sorrow. His was so beautiful a life, and yours was so perfect a marriage, that being parted from him for a time must at first be all the harder and more bitter. For us all, indeed, the world seems so much the poorer now that he is no more with us.

Among all my friends there was no one whom I cared more for, or admired more, or reverenced more, than your husband : in no house used I to meet with a kinder welcome,—there was no home I was gladder to go to.

But do you not think about those we have lost, that their love, though unseen, is still felt by us—that they are only in a distant part of our Father's House? Dear friend, I am yours affectionately ever, JANE LEE.

Nor were Ferguson's friends of a different persuasion less sympathetic. Mr Justice O'Hagan, a large-hearted and devout member of the Church of Rome, wrote as follows to Lady Ferguson :—

22 UPPER FITZWILLIAM STREET, 1*st October* 1886.

MY DEAR LADY FERGUSON,—I thank you for your beautiful and touching letter, and for the memorials you enclose. The

two sonnets and Lord Plunket's address are full of genuine feeling finely expressed. The photograph is really wonderful. I think I never saw any portrait so vivid and lifelike. The calm, sweet, thoughtful face is there as if the lips were about to open and speak.

You are very kind in what you say of my endeavours to make his genius appreciated in Ireland. I reproach myself with not having done far more. My last interview with him and the pressure of his hand remain, as they cannot fail to be, indelibly impressed upon my memory. Hoping that I may be soon able to see you, and with renewed expression of my deep sympathy, believe me, dear Lady Ferguson, ever faithfully yours, JOHN O'HAGAN.

A few days after the great sorrow of her life had fallen on the present writer, she received the following letter from her friend Dr Graves, enclosing one from his nephew, Alfred Perceval Graves, son of the Lord Bishop of Limerick. Dr Graves's letter enclosed two sonnets—one written by the younger poet, which appeared in the 'Spectator' a few days after Sir Samuel Ferguson's death, the other addressed to herself by Dr Graves:—

I think it will gratify you to read not only the sonnet, but also a letter to myself, which have reached me from my nephew Alfred, and the former of which he suggests my sending on to you. It was pleasing to me to note the attitude of honouring respect which the younger poet takes towards his elder and superior, and I think you will like to read in his letter his expression of gratitude for personal kindness towards himself.

I add what I am afraid is *really* (what Milton's was not) "a poor sonnet" addressed by myself to you; but you may attach some value to it as imbedding words now sacred to you.

May I soon go over and have the pleasure—for it always must be a pleasure, even if a sad one—of seeing you?

Alfred P. Graves's letter to his uncle contained the following passage:—

I have been deeply concerned to learn from you of the death of Sir Samuel Ferguson. . . .

I shall very much miss Sir Samuel; for he had been most generously kind to me. Thanks to you, I met him at Howth, and had a short but most interesting talk with him. When I spoke with regret of the neglect of all but Irish Political Literature, he said, "My dear Graves, our time will come."

Certainly he deserves a far ampler recognition than he has obtained in his lifetime. It will come, and I think it the duty of us younger Irish poets to see that he obtains his due as by far the noblest epic-writer we have had.

I should have liked to have expressed my sorrow at his loss to Lady Ferguson, with whom I can, after my own, deeply sympathise, but I am shy of intruding upon her grief directly. But perhaps you might have an opportunity of letting her see the accompanying sonnet, which I have sent to the 'Spectator.' I trust you may like it.

SIR SAMUEL FERGUSON.

"Strong Son of Fergus, with thy latest breath
Thou hast lent a joy unto the funeral knell,
Welcoming with thy whispered 'All is well'
The awful aspect of the Angel Death:
As strong in life, thou couldst not brook to shun
The heat and burthen of the fiery day,
Fronting defeat with stalwart undismay,
And wearing meekly honours stoutly won.
Pure lips, pure hands, pure heart were thine, as aye
Erin demanded from her bards of old,
And therefore on thy harp-strings of pure gold
Has waked once more her high heroic lay.
What shoulders now shall match the mighty fold
Of Ossian's mantle? Thou hast passed away."

ALFRED PERCEVAL GRAVES.

17th August 1886.

LADY FERGUSON.

"Thus spoke he, when he saw her rising tear:
'Mary, you must be brave. Though now we part,
We shall be reunited.' And her heart
Drank in with sad delight the tender cheer.
Nor could she but be sad, when he was near
Who soon would be so far; when every art
To keep him here was baffled; when the dart
Of ruthless Death must strike a life so dear.
In all things was she Partner of his Mind;
Felt with him as a Poet; with her own
His joy in Shakespeare matched; nor fell behind
His quest of Bardic lay and Ogham stone.
And Partner is she still; to her is given
His 'All is well' to breathe in hope of Heaven."

ROBERT PERCEVAL GRAVES.

21st August 1886.

Dr Graves sent his sonnet and that of his nephew to Sir Frederic Burton, who acknowledged them in the following letter:—

MY DEAR GRAVES,—I am very thankful to you for the two beautiful sonnets you have so kindly sent me. Each tells in few words the story of a beautiful life; for if the subject of the one was a Man, in every high sense of the term, the subject of the other has been a Wife, ideal in her devotion. One offers oneself the feeble consolation that Ferguson had lived the ordinary time allotted to man. But that can in no way mitigate the grief for an irreparable loss. There might—there would have been a solace in thinking that his closing days had been illumed by the dawn of all he hoped and laboured for, with such ardour and single-minded love of country. Perhaps his hope never abandoned him to the last. But to us still living all looks dark indeed, and the darker the more we try to peer into the dreary gloom of Ireland's future. That blind prospect never leaves my mind. But it is worse than useless to talk of these things.

And Mr Aubrey de Vere, to whom Dr Graves had sent his own and his nephew's sonnet, acknowledged them in these words:—

AMBLESIDE, *Sept.* 11, 1886.

MY DEAR MR GRAVES,—Your letter has just reached me in this land of Lakes, which, I know, is a land very dear to you, and I think that both the sonnets would have met the hearty approval and strong sympathy of the great poet whom you knew so well when you resided in his neighbourhood near this haunt of his. After saying this, it is hardly worth while to add that I too admire them both, and have read them more than once with great interest. The Poet of Ireland and her ancient days deserved this tribute; and it will be acceptable to very many: to her who was a "helpmate" to him in his poetic labours, as in all things beside, it must be especially precious. I read the obituary notice of our old friend in a Dublin paper, as well as the Archbishop's sermon, with much pleasure, but I did not see that in the 'Academy.' No one was more certain to write it both ably and sympathetically than Miss Stokes.

Dr Whitley Stokes wrote from the Continent (Neuhausen) to Lady Ferguson:—

Your kind letter of the 5th inst. followed me hither, and I was about to answer it and give some account of such of my discoveries at Paris, Saint Germain, Orléans, and Schaffhausen as would have interested Sir Samuel, when I saw in the 'Times' and 'Galignani' the startling news of his death. He was the dearest and most honoured of my friends, and I still feel stunned and bewildered by the blow. I am haunted by his own words about Thomas Davis:—

> "I may lie and try to think I am but dreaming,
> May lie and try to say, Thy will be done,
> But a hundred such as I will never comfort Erin
> For the loss of her noble son."

I am asking Maddie to send me to Lausanne, *poste restante*, the fuller notices of him which are sure to appear in the Dublin and London papers.

And his brother, Sir William Stokes, felt no less keenly the severance of a friendship which commenced with his earliest recollections :—

5 Merrion Square, *Aug.* 15, 1886.

My dear Lady Ferguson,—I enclose the certificate. I have just returned from England, and I need hardly say how deeply I regret having been unable to pay a last tribute of respect to one whom all revered and honoured. To have had Sir Samuel's goodwill and friendship were privileges for which I shall ever feel grateful and proud.—Believe me, my dear Lady Ferguson, with true sympathy, ever yours,

William Stokes.

The latest letter which Lady Ferguson wrote at her dying husband's dictation, but which he signed with his own hand, was addressed to the Bishop of Down and Connor. It contained expressions of loving regard, and "hope of renewed participation of spirit hereafter," and was responded to by Bishop Reeves in the following communication to his bereaved friend. Sir Samuel's letter is first given :—

Strand Lodge, Howth, *7th August* 1886.

My dear Bishop,—I feel that I nearly approach the time when I must exchange my transitory quarters here for the permanent repose of Donegore. . . .

It would be a comfort if you would sometimes cast an eye on the last resting-place of one in whom you now have some interest as Bishop of the old Dalriadian stock, and were you present at my interment it would be deemed a gracious act of old friendship and esteem, but this subject

to other calls and contingencies to which your Episcopal office now subjects you.

With loving regards while life lasts, and hope of renewed participation of spirit hereafter, your affectionate friend,

SAMUEL FERGUSON.

THE LIBRARY, ARMAGH, *Aug.* 10, 1886.

MY DEAR MARY,—Mourning is now your sad lot, but it has not come upon you unawares, and when I last saw your dear husband, I knew that his days were numbered, and the leave I took I felt to be the last on earth.

A prince in the excellences of human nature has been removed from earth, and probably never again shall I see one who equally combined all the best qualities of head and heart, and so tempered one by the other that it was difficult to decide whether he was most to be loved or admired. The sad news came to me this morning by the Belfast paper, and this was soon followed by letters, and among them yours with its precious enclosure. That you should think of me at such an hour, and that my beloved friend should make his last confession of attachment with his dying breath, and testify to its sincerity by a signature emblematic, in its firmness, of steady friendship, is more than I could even suppose possible under such trying circumstances. He died, I am sure, the death of the righteous, and by his memories, numerous and sweet, he still speaks and says, "So I thought and felt in the day of health and activity, but the season of weakness and pain came on, and death has freed me gently from the continuance of suffering." And he is at peace.

Dear Mary, if he were an ordinary man, you would require more external comfort than you now do, for the picture which he has left upon your mind will continually, even in the saddest moments, represent to you how much you owe to the Great Giver for what He has bestowed upon you as a wife, and the good long term of the gift. I hope I may be able to be in my place as the honoured remains reach Belfast, though on account of solemn appointments

which stand against me for Thursday and the following day, I scarcely know how firmly I may be holden in my official capacity. St James's, Belfast, I know, and Donegore I well remember,—it is my ardent wish to be found in both, if only it can be accomplished. Thanks to you, my very dear friend of old, for what you have sent me—and at such a moment.—Yours affectionately and hopefully,

WM. DOWN AND CONNOR.

Two years later, on receiving 'The Remains of St Patrick,' a cheap reissue of her husband's "Patrician Documents" which Lady Ferguson dedicated to four friends — the Archbishop of Dublin, the Bishop of Meath, the Bishop of Down, Connor, and Dromore, and the Rev. Robert King — Bishop Reeves thus acknowledged the arrival of the volume :—

CONWAY HOUSE, DUNMURRY, CO. ANTRIM,
Sept. 12, 1888.

MY DEAR MARY,—I have just received the graceful little volume of the Patrician Documents, which I shall ever prize as well for the sake of the author as the giver. The printing is very pleasingly executed, and though it does not pretend to the dignity of the R. I. Academy 'Transactions,' it is much more handy, and better adapted to the convenience of the ordinary reader. I hope it will be well received, and amply fulfil the purpose of the learned translator. This useful book comes within the precincts of the Church, and will be an enduring monument of the love which your dear husband bore to the pure religion of his native country. Accept my hearty thanks for the gift, and for your kindness in placing me in the quaternion of the dedication.—Believe me to be your affectionate friend,

WM. DOWN AND CONNOR.

These friendships, which formed so large an element in the happy life of Ferguson, might be largely ex-

tended. Enough has been given to show the influence of his strong yet gentle nature, and how truly he was loved and reverenced, as well as the wide comprehension and helpful sympathy with which he entered into the feelings and interests of others. Rancour, never sought, came to him not. Genial seasons, joyous thought, were his throughout life. He had his full share of struggle, care, and anxiety, yet he was uniformly happy. His was the experience of the Psalmist—

"GOODNESS AND MERCY SHALL FOLLOW ME ALL THE DAYS OF MY LIFE; AND I WILL DWELL IN THE HOUSE OF THE LORD FOR EVER."

APPENDIX.

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1832.	The Forging of the Anchor . .	Feb.	Blackwood.
	The Wet Wooing	April.	"
	Light and Darkness	Oct.	"
1833.	An Irish Garland	Jan.	"
	The Forrest-Race Romance . .	Feb.	"
	The Fairy Well	April.	"
	Songs after Béranger . . .	May.	"
	Regner Lodbrog	June.	"
	Nora Boyle	Sept.	"
	Return of Claneboy	Dec.	"
	Don Gomez and the Cid . . .	Aug.	Dublin
	Pierce Bodkin	Oct.	University
	Dialogue between Head and Heart .	Nov.	Magazine.
	Willie and Pate	Nov.	"
	Tale of a Tub	Dec.	"
1834.	Inaugural Ode	Jan.	"
	Hilloa our Fancy	"	"
	Athens: A Sonnet	Feb.	"
	Grana Weal	"	"
	Captain Bey	"	"

1834.	Sixpenny Manifesto	March.	Dublin
	Grana Weal's Garland	"	University
	The Fairy Thorn	"	Magazine.
	The Forester's Complaint	April.	"
	Hardiman's 'Irish Minstrelsy,' I.	"	"
	The Stray Canto	July.	"
	Hardiman's 'Irish Minstrelsy,' II.	Aug.	"
	Irish Storyists	Sept.	"
	Fancy, the Scene Shifter	"	"
	Hardiman's 'Irish Minstrelsy,' III.	Oct.	"
	" " IV.	Nov.	"

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	Hibernian Nights' Entertainments	Dec.	"
	Shane O'Neill	Feb.	Blackwood.
1835.	Hibernian Nights' Entertainments—		Dublin
	Jan., Feb., March, April, June,		University
	July, Aug., Sept., Nov., Dec.		Magazine.
1836.	Hibernian Nights' Entertainments—		
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	Three Ballads	Jan.	"
	The Sketcher Foiled: A Poem	July.	"
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	Curiosities of Irish Literature	March, May.	"
	Scotic Controversy	June, Oct.	"
	The Involuntary Experimentalist	Oct.	Blackwood.
	Article on the Brehon Laws	Knight's Penny Cyclopædia.	
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	Father Tom and the Pope	"	"

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1839.	Gallery of Illustrious Irishmen—Petrie	Dec.	
		Dublin University Magazine.	
1840.	Essay, "Of the Antiquity of the Harp and Bagpipe in Ireland." Contributed to Bunting's 'Ancient Music of Ireland.'	Hodges & Smith, Dublin.	

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1843.	Clarendon on the Horse . . .	Feb.	University
1844.	Mrs H. Gray's 'Etruria' . . .	Nov.	Magazine.
	Ordnance Survey Memoir . .	April.	"
	Eugene Sue	Dec.	"
1845.	Burns	Jan. and March.	"
	Mrs Barrett Browning . . .	Feb.	"
	Petrie's 'Round Towers' . . .	April.	"
	O'Connor's Irish Brigade . . .	May.	"
	Jerusalem	Sept.	"
	The Welshmen of Tirawley . .	"	"
	Letter to Hallam: Henri de Londres	Nov.	"
	Irish Novelists	Dec.	"
	Betham's 'Etruria Celtica' . .	April.	Blackwood.
1847.	Article and Poem on Thomas Davis	Feb.	"
	Lines on Mangan	May.	"
	Architecture in Ireland . . .	June.	Dublin
1848.	Reeves's 'Ecclesiastical Antiquities'	Feb.	University
	'Annals of the Four Masters' .	March, May.	Magazine.
	Nineveh	April.	"
	Inheritor and Economist: A Poem .	May.	"
1849.	Ruskin's 'Seven Lamps of Architecture'	July.	"
	Dublin: A Satire, after Juvenal .	"	"
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	Hungary: A Poem	Sept.	"
	Physical Geography—The Air .	Nov.	"
	Fallacies of the Fallacies . . .	Dec.	"
1850.	Irish Tourists: Giraldus Cambrensis—		
		Jan., Feb., March.	"
	Rummage Review	Nov.	"
	The Siege of Dunbeg . . .	Feb.	Blackwood.
1851.	Ruskin's 'Stones of Venice' . .	Sept.	Dublin
1852.	Celto-Scythic Progress . . .	March.	University
	Chesney on Artillery . . .	April.	Magazine.
1853.	Clonmacnois, Clare, and Aran	Jan. and April.	"
	Archytus and the Mariner . .	April.	"
	Nineveh	June.	"
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1867. On the Rudiments of the Common Law, discoverable in the published Portion of the 'Senchus Mor.'
1880. Fasciculus of Prints from Photographs of Casts of Ogham Inscriptions.
1882. Sepulchral Cellæ.
1885. Patrician Documents.

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Continuation of the above.
Remarks on the late Publication of the Society of Northern Antiquaries.
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1874. On an Ogham-Inscribed Stone from Mount Music, Co. Cork.
On a recently discovered Ogham Inscription at Breastagh, in the Co. of Mayo.
On an Ogham-Inscribed Stone (No. 1) at Monataggart, Co. Cork.
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1875. Additional Note on Ogham Inscriptions at Monataggart, Co. Cork.
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1880. On the Doorway of the Round Tower of Kildare.
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1883. On some Passages in the 'Confessio' of St Patrick.
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EXTANT PORTRAITS OF FERGUSON.

A sketch in crayons by Sir F. W. Burton, taken in 1848.
An oil painting by Miss Kate Morgan, 1880.
A large oil painting by Miss Purser, 1886. The property of the Royal Irish Academy.

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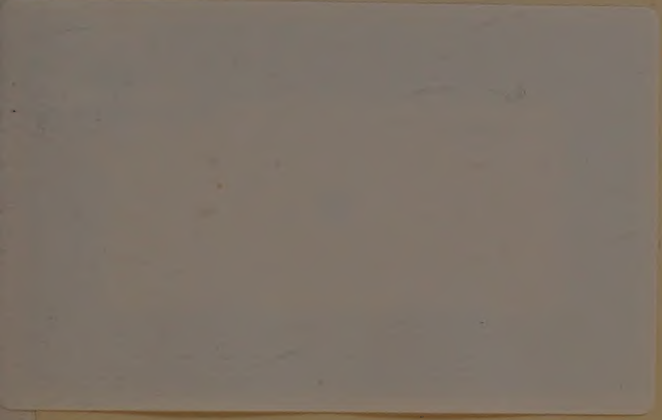
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